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## NEWS SUMMARY

### GENERAL

**Troops fire at Belfast rioters**

Police and troops were shot and fired back with live ammunition and rubber bullets. Rioters were warned to keep clear of the streets and 2,000 troops and police were faced on alert.

The alert will last for the next few days. The tenth anniversary of the arrival of British troops in Ulster and the annual Apprentice Boys' parade both fall in that period.

**Health rebels**

A second London area health authority is contesting spending cuts ordered in its services. Basing, Hammersmith and Hounslow officials have agreed to make £1m cuts, but want to defer the remaining £3m to 1981.

**Yachts capsized**

Several yachts capsized in mountainous seas off the Kent and Devon coasts and holiday camp sites were flooded in Wales as storms swept across much of Britain. Winds gusted up to 70 mph.

**Star warning**

Express Newspapers chairman Victor Matthews said he would not invest further in the group's Daily Star tabloid which there was no agreement to print in London as well as Manchester.

**Empty chair**

For the second successive year no poet was elected to the Bardic Chair at the Royal National Eisteddfod in Caernarvon because none of the 13 entries was thought worthy of the honour.

**Concorde chaos**

British Airways Concorde services were badly disrupted when four of the airline's five super-sonic aircraft were grounded with minor and unrelated technical faults. Passengers were transferred to other flights.

**Costly voyage**

Three Hong Kong businessmen who arranged for 3,000 Vietnamese refugees to come to the colony on the freighter They Fong were each fined for seven years and fined \$10,000 for misleading the immigration authorities.

**Homes destroyed**

Thirteen holiday houses and other buildings standing on the edge of a huge canyon caused by a landslide in Abbotsford, a suburb of Dunedin, New Zealand. More than 400 people were evacuated and 53 homes destroyed.

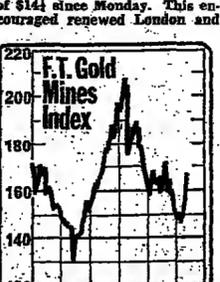
**ITV hopes fade**

Hopes of an early settlement of the dispute which has blacked out independent television screens diminished after the Attorney General said it saw no purpose in holding further talks with both sides.

### BUSINESS

**Gold rise continues; Equities off 6.3**

GOLD gained a further \$5 in London to close at \$296.1—a rise of \$14 since Monday. This encouraged renewed London and



overseas buying of South African Gold, which left the Gold Mines Index 8.4 higher at 186.3—a two-day gain of 16.3. In New York, the Comex August settlement was \$299.80 (\$293.90).

EQUITIES eased and the FT 30-share index closed 6.3 down at 467.4.

GILTS firmed ahead of next week's money supply figures, and gains of 1 were cut to 1. The Government Securities index closed 0.41 up at 73.96.

STERLING improved 2 pence to close at \$2.255, and its trade weighted index rose to 71.1 (70.6). DOLLAR fell on rising U.S. wholesale prices and its index dropped to 84.4 (86.5).

SYDNEY: All Ordinaries index closed 6.09 higher at 655.11, a new high for the year.

WALL STREET closed 4.88 down at 852.25.

U.S. MONEY SUPPLY: M1 rose to \$372.3bn (\$371.1bn); M2 rose to \$914.5bn (\$913.8bn).

BANK MELLON, Iran's biggest bank, reports an "unprecedented" rise in deposits in the five months since the revolution.

BRITISH STEEL Corporation is likely to continue importing high-quality coking coal for its new Redcar works on Teesside in spite of National Coal Board efforts to produce a substitute.

WEST GERMAN Government is being urged by a number of Christian Democrat politicians to step up its imports of coal to cope with its coal-gasification and liquefaction plans for the 1980s.

CHEMICALS manufacturers face a gloomy year according to the Chemical Industries Association. It forecasts output no more than 1 per cent up on 1978, falling demand, fuel shortages and greater U.S. competition.

WAGES COUNCIL has fixed new minimum weekly rates of £50 for adult non-service workers in licensed hotels and restaurants and £41.20 for service workers. Minimum rates will be 24 higher in London.

COMPANIES

GEC managing director Sir Arnold Weinstock said the group was in a far stronger position to withstand setbacks and to take advantage of new opportunities in the 1980s than we were in 1970.

NEWMAN HEENAN International increased its cash bid for Wellman Engineering Corporation by 5p to 70p per share.

AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS, the vehicle and aircraft equipment concern, reports pre-tax profits 8.3 per cent ahead at £7.85m for the first half of 1979.

## All Chrysler UK car output may halt next week

BY ARTHUR SMITH, MIDLANDS CORRESPONDENT

All car production by Chrysler UK is likely to be halted by the effects of strike action from the middle of next week.

The company, which now sells its makes under the Talbot name after being taken over by Peugeot-Citroen, said last night that there would have to be extensive lay-offs among the 7,000-strong workforce at Linwood, Scotland, by next Wednesday.

Linwood, which assembles the Avenger and Suburban models, depends for engines and other components on the Stoke factory, Coventry, where a strike by 3,500 production workers is now into its fifth week.

The 2,000 workers at the nearby Ryton factory, Coventry, which produces the Alpine, walked out seven weeks ago.

Both Coventry plants are protesting at the company's offer of a 5 per cent pay increase. Chrysler UK insists that it cannot afford a high award as a loss of £30m is already forecast for this financial year.

The company has refused to budge from the 5 per cent limit but insists that a proposed incentive scheme could yield an extra 15 or more a week.

Talks with the unions broke down several weeks ago, and both sides appear prepared for a lengthy confrontation in what is becoming an increasingly bitter dispute.

Feelings are running high among strike leaders at the Ryton plant, where there have been stormy scenes on the picket lines as workers have tried to prevent staff from entering.

The company warned employees before the strike that action would almost certainly mark the start of a rundown in the company's size.

The Linwood plant has had the most troubled industrial relations over recent years, but the management believes it is close to agreement with the unions there.

The Scottish workers have been offered more as part of a long-standing company commitment to achieve pay parity with employees in Coventry.

Negotiations are also making good progress at the Dunstable, Beds, truck plant where employees benefit from the parity programme.

Dunstable also takes components from Stoke, but the company said last night that its stocks were sufficient to avoid any disruption to production for the next few weeks.

Clerical workers at Ryton voted yesterday not to cross the picket lines outside the plant. The decision was taken by an impromptu factory gate meeting of members of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Management Staffs, the largest staff union involved. It followed a call by angry strike leaders for a massive picket by the 2,000 strikers for this morning after staff had crossed the picket lines on Wednesday.

Mr. John Fisher, ASTMS divisional organiser, said: "Our members bitterly resent being the meat in the sandwich. The company has told them that they will not be paid if they do not go in to work. They want to work but do not want to cross the picket lines. The company is trying to use them to break the strike."

## Government borrowing up 54% on last year

BY PETER RIDDELL, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT borrowing in the first four months of the financial year was well above the level of a year ago.

But the Budget measures have not yet worked through to affect revenue or expenditure.

The Treasury announced yesterday that borrowing was £3,880m between April and June, compared with £2,520m in the corresponding period of 1978. This was an increase of 54.2 per cent, against the Budget projection of an 18 per cent rise for 1979-80 as a whole.

The high level of borrowing has led to the sale of a large amount of gilt-edged stock in recent months in order to offset any expansionary influence on the money supply.

Although value added tax was raised to 15 per cent in mid-June, receipts came in three months in arrears. The first stage of the income-tax rebates will not affect borrowing until this month.

The official hope is that public spending cuts will start to bite by late summer. Coupled with higher indirect taxes, this will offset the reduction in income-tax and produce a lower level of borrowing from the autumn.

City analysts are taking a cautious view of these hopes. The figures so far provide an early guide. They had little effect on the gilt-edged market yesterday.

Late profit-taking reduced early gains of 1 in longer-dated stock to half a point by the close. The FT Government Securities index is now 2.4 per cent higher than at the end of last month.

The former long top—111 per cent Treasury 2008-07—rose to 118 at one stage yesterday. This compared with the price of 115, at which it was sold out on Wednesday. The stock closed only fractionally bigger at 115.1.

The latest figures show that central Government borrowing was £48m last month, compared with a surplus of £143m last year. July is traditionally a good month for revenue as a result of quarterly VAT payments. These were boosted last month by the buoyant level of retail sales in the spring.

So far this year, revenue has risen by roughly 15 per cent, compared with the Budget forecast of an 18 per cent increase for the year as a whole. Expenditure has been 15 per cent higher during the period. This is broadly in line with the expected rise for the whole year, though it is slightly misleading at a time of accelerating inflation.

The main change compared with last year has been in lending to the rest of the public sector, mainly via the National Loans Fund. In the first four months of 1979-80, net lending was £70m more than last year, when the figures reflected repayments of £26m by the National Enterprise Board.

Two brokers who dominate gilt market Page 5

## Tricentral buys out royalty deal

BY RAY DAFTER, ENERGY EDITOR

TRICENTRAL IS to pay the Government almost £20m in order to be released from special royalty payments on oil produced from the North Sea-Thistle Field.

The UK-based group was to provide the Government with a minimum of 5 per cent of its share of Thistle production—either as oil or in cash—in return for the State backing a £80m loan taken out in 1976. The first payment would have been due in January.

The special royalty, which would have been in addition to the normal 12.5 per cent royalty payments, was a feature of a unique North Sea financing deal which helped Tricentral to pay its share of Thistle's £80m development costs.

It was one of several financing arrangements used by companies to help fund the installation of production equipment in several offshore fields during the uncertain early years of oil development.

## Germany faces 5% inflation

By Jonathan Carr in Bonn

THE WEST GERMAN cost of living rose in July by 4.6 per cent against the same month last year—a year on year rise not equalled since the summer of 1976. The 5 per cent mark appears certain to be passed in the coming months.

Although some one-off factors are partly responsible for the rise, particularly sharp West German standards, the development will mean trouble both for the Government and the trade unions in the autumn.

Not only is the Bonn coalition under growing Opposition pressure to agree to tax cut next year to help reconcile unions to moderate wage settlements, but union leadership faces demands from rank and file both for an interim bonus due to current price increases and for substantial wages agreements in the winter.

So far the Government argument that oil price increases are largely responsible for the cost of living rise—incomes in dollar terms which this year the Germans can no longer offset with particularly strong D-mark—has largely prevailed.

But now two other factors are contributing—the July introduction of a long-planned value-added tax rise, and the particularly low living cost increases last year with which the 1979 results are being compared.

The rise from June to July this year was 0.6 per cent whereas last summer and autumn living costs on a month-to-month basis were either stable or actually dropped.

The Opposition feels it has a winner in its bid for tax cuts in 1980, on the grounds that it will be able to claim the credit if the proposals are accepted, while the Government will have to bear the unpopularity if they are not.

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## France prepares package

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## Dollar under pressure

BY PETER RIDDELL

THE DOLLAR yesterday came under pressure in the foreign exchange markets for the first time since the middle of last month in response to the U.S. wholesale prices figures.

The U.S. Federal Reserve and other central banks intervened during the afternoon but the dollar still closed down on the day.

It fell to DM 1.8235 from DM 1.8295 on Wednesday while its trade-weighted index, as calculated by the Bank of England, fell by 0.2 points to 84.4.

The weakness of the dollar boosted sterling which closed 2 cents higher at \$2.255.

## Carter steps in as U.S. prices surge

BY DAVID BUCHAN IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Jimmy Carter is to step more directly into the anti-inflation fight amid indications yesterday that a still higher rate of price rises may be on the way.

A fresh surge in petrol and heating oil prices helped to push wholesale prices in July up 1.1 per cent, the largest monthly increase since February, it was announced.

Last month's increase, amounting to 1.4 per cent at a compound annual rate, casts doubt on Administration predictions that price rises had peaked in the first half of 1979. Then, consumer or retail prices rose at an annual 13.2 per cent.

Wholesale food prices in July showed no change, having fallen in the previous three months at an annual rate of 17.3 per cent. But consumers have not benefited at the retail level from this drop.

President Carter has summoned representatives of the food and meat processing industry to the White House next Monday to complain about increases in sales margins.

Mr. Richard Lyng, President of the American Meat Institute, called the White House "jaw-boning" session a political move by the President. It certainly is that, though Administration economists also regard the food sector as the most susceptible to Government pressure. The two other major components of the U.S. inflation rate—energy and house prices—are considered less controllable.

Wholesale petrol and home heating oil prices rose last month by 3.9 and 9 per cent respectively.

## Consumers

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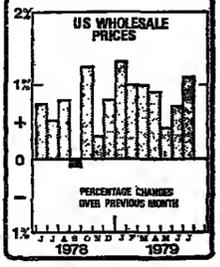
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## Recession

The Administration hopes to gain some relief on inflation as the economy continues on into recession. But it is believed that a real reduction in the inflation rate may come only if the recession is longer and deeper than Mr. Carter would find politically acceptable in the 1980 election year.



Mr. Alfred Kahn, the President's inflation adviser, said this week that refiners might be as guilty as food processors of unjustifiably increasing their profit margins.

Next Monday's meeting will be the first time that President Carter has resorted to the kind of political arm-twisting other Presidents have used to get sectors of industry to restrain prices. Previously, he has largely confined himself to contacting individual companies and trade unions that have breached, or threatened to breach, his voluntary pay and price standards.

£ in New York

	Aug. 9	Previous
Spot	£2.2550-2300/\$2.2555-2370	
1 month	0.65-0.50, dia 0.77-0.78 dia	
3 months	1.76-1.73 dia 1.87-1.82 dia	
12 months	5.30-5.03 dia 5.50-5.25 dia	

## CHIEF PRICE CHANGES YESTERDAY

(Prices in pence unless otherwise indicated)

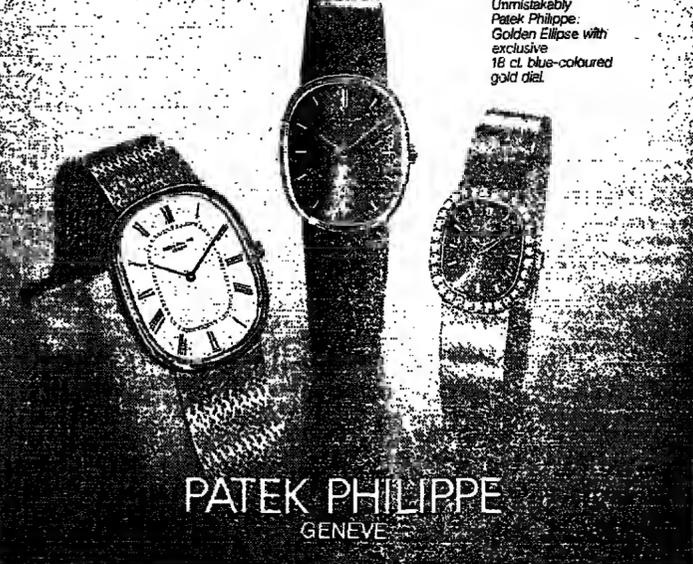
RISES	FALLS
Treas. 11pc 2003-07 (£15 pd.)	Kloof Gold
AGC Research	Northgate Explor.
Allen Harvey Ross	Southern Kinta
Automotive Prods.	Vaal Reefs
Barclays Bank	Westfield Minerals
Barlow Rand	
Brown and Jackson	
Carlin Inds.	
Chubb	
Dixon (DJ)	
Fogarty (E.)	
Hambros Bank	
Harris Queensway	
IDC	
Radian Metal	
SA Breweries	
Anglo American	
Blyvoor	
Impedia Platinum	
Kennington	
	Blyvoor (J.)
	Distillers
	Grand Metropolitan
	CUS A
	Heath (C.E.)
	Highland Distills.
	ICI
	Minet
	Smith (David S.)
	Stylin Shoes
	Trusthouse Forte
	Woodhead
	Belvoir
	Woodhead (Jonas)
	Tricentral

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GENEVE

EUROPEAN NEWS

Bucharest liberation row fuels dispute in Warsaw Pact

BY LESLIE COLITT IN BERLIN

WARSAW PACT countries closely tied to the Soviet Union are engaged in a running Press battle with independent-minded Romania over who liberated the Romanian capital, Bucharest, from the Nazis 35 years ago (the month).

This seemingly obscure dispute has taken on a new meaning now that Romania, under President Nicolae Ceausescu, is involved in a serious confrontation with the other six Warsaw Pact countries.

At issue is the question of whether Bucharest was liberated by the Red Army or by the Romanian Communist Party and units of the Romanian Army.

As is often the case, East Germany speaks for the Soviet Union in such a debate. Yesterday's issue of the East German Communist newspaper Neues Deutschland reminds its readers of the latest instalment of a Russian documentary film on the war being shown on East German television. It deals with how the Soviet Army brought freedom to South Eastern Europe.

The newspaper says that after the Romanian uprising started in Bucharest on August 23, 1944, "Soviet troops moved into the capital." The film, it notes, shows the "heroic actions of the Soviet soldiers in the city of Bucharest."

But Romania is not letting



President Nicolae Ceausescu

the matter rest there. A leading political publication is running a series of articles on what took place in 1944. The Soviet Union's contribution to driving the Germans out of Romania is given only brief mention.

German military and civilian technical advisers entered Romania in June 1940, after General Ion Antonescu took over dictatorial powers and restored King Michael I to the throne. The country remained virtually occupied by the Nazis until the liberation.

A general who commanded a Romanian Army cavalry unit says the cavalry saved Bucharest from being re-invaded by surrounding German troops.

Irish sea oil find 'not commercial'

By Stewart Dalby, Dublin Correspondent

CHEVRON OIL has found traces of hydrocarbons in test drilling of one of its wells off western Ireland. But it is understood that the results do not indicate commercial possibilities. A statement from the company is expected.

Chevron, whose partners are ICI and Bula Oil, a privately-owned Irish company, has been drilling the well, 150 miles west of Shannon, since May 15.

The well, which is Chevron's first in the area, is in Block 35/11 in the Porcupine Trough and is about 70 miles south-west of Block 35/8. That is where Phillips made a small strike last October. Its well tested at 730 barrels a day. Although deemed non-commercial by Phillips, it was the first encouraging oil strike in a 20-year search.

Interest will now centre on the remaining tests due this year, particularly on those in the Porcupine area. Four wells are probable, two are definite. BP is drilling on Block 26/28, about 180 miles west of Galway. Gulf Oil is getting ready for a test drill in the autumn on Block 26/21 about 190 miles west of Galway.

Elsewhere, Amoco is drilling about 40 miles north-west of Donegal on Block 12/13. Marathon is drilling some 50 miles south of Yougal on Block 49/17 off south-east Ireland.

Ireland imports 80 per cent of its energy at present. It has little coal, little peat, and apart from a small offshore gas field, almost no other indigenous source of energy.

Cossiga spells out the priorities for Italy

BY PAUL BETTS IN ROME

ENERGY problems, measures to halt inflation and preserve the competitiveness of industry, and law and order are to be the priorities of the new Italian Government.

But opening the confidence debate in Parliament on his administration yesterday, Sig. Francesco Cossiga, the Christian Democrat Prime Minister, acknowledged the "political limits" of his Government.

His administration, ending the country's longest government crisis in 30 years, aims principally to provide a working government at least until the bitter divisions between and within the political parties are healed and a more stable solution is found.

The confidence vote this weekend is expected to be a formality. The Christian Democrats, Liberals and Social Democrats, all directly represented in the government, will

vote in favour. The Socialists, who hold the parliamentary balance, say they will abstain. Sig. Cossiga has not presented a Government programme in the traditional sense, but rather a broad declaration of intentions.

He said the Government would seek to strengthen and reform the police and security forces to combat terrorism more effectively.

On economic matters, Sig. Cossiga intended to continue the broad lines of the three-year recovery programme drawn up last year by Sig. Filippo Maria Pandolfi, the Treasury Minister. This is designed to lay the basis for stable growth and to tackle fundamental distortions in the economy.

However, he would wait until the end of this year before presenting the revised medium-term programme since the original had to be updated in

the light of economic developments.

The Prime Minister appealed for the collaboration of the unions to improve productivity and curb increasing labour costs.

He proposed to isolate the sharp rise in energy and raw materials costs from Italy's cost-of-living index. In return, the Government would make some cuts in direct taxation. But in view of the voracious demands of public spending, it would be necessary to increase fiscal revenue, in particular by measures to halt tax evasion.

Later this year, the Government would organise a conference on nuclear energy, but he warned that unless a nuclear programme was launched soon the country would face enormous difficulties.

● Sig. Cossiga (right) and his newly formed Cabinet



Dutch unions to co-ordinate wage demands

BY CHARLES BATCHELOR IN AMSTERDAM

THE LARGEST union federation in the Netherlands hopes to draw up a uniform programme of demands in time for the 1980 wage round which starts in November.

Failure to adopt a common approach earlier this year meant individual unions were unable to achieve their aim of a shorter working week. This led to recriminations within the federation.

It hopes that closer consultation with its members will facilitate

agreement on a joint programme, and wants to speed up wage negotiations. Some sectors have still not settled a contract for this year.

The Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging, representing 1.1m members from Socialist and Catholic industry-based unions, intends, along with its co-ordinated action strategy, to make a 10 per cent reduction in working hours over the next four years its main target in the next wage round, said Mr. Wim

Spit, the vice-chairman.

Production levels in Dutch industry recovered during the second quarter of this year after declining in the preceding three months due to the severe winter.

The seasonally adjusted index for the manufacturing, minerals and gas industries rose to a provisional level of 131.1 (1970=100) from 129 in the first quarter.

More normal levels of activity were restored in the minerals

industry and the public utilities—particularly high in the first quarter—and in the building industry, which had been very low. Production in the metals and foodstuffs sectors was depressed, although oil and chemicals were much more active.

The bad winter also caused a sharp drop in investment in the first quarter. Gross investments in fixed assets fell 27.5 per cent compared with the first quarter of last year.

Profits fall in third of Spain's big companies

By Robert Graham in Madrid

ONE-THIRD of the major Spanish companies saw their profits fall last year, according to a study just prepared by the Review Economic de la Produccion. Of 180 companies and banks analysed 66 had lower profits or sustained losses.

There were, according to the study, 23 loss-making concerns—primarily operating in steel, cars and trucks, large-scale retailing and paper. The average return on capital was 6 per cent, only just over a third of the rate of inflation. In no sector analysed did the return on capital keep pace with last year's 16-17 per cent inflation.

The most profitable sectors were cement, banking and foodstuffs. Spain is the world's largest exporter of cement and last year showed a 49 per cent increase in export earnings to \$350m. Here the return on capital was 14.6 per cent and the industry continues to be one of the few to attract domestic investment.

The other profitable sector was banking, with a 13.6 per cent return on capital. Despite difficulties in some of the small and industrial banks this sector remains one of the most privileged in the country.

About half the total profits in the 180 concerns studied came from 48 banks. Many of the 48 banks were frequently significant shareholders in, and suppliers of credit to troubled sectors such as steel, shipbuilding and the paper industry.

In contrast, companies operating in the insurance sector, poorly developed in Spain and hamstrung by antiquated regulations, saw a return on capital of only 2 per cent.

A particular feature of the Spanish economy is the importance of the 13 mainly privately owned utility companies. They account for just under 40 per cent of total profits in the survey sample.

The principal private shareholders in these utilities are banks, and the 48 banks and these utilities accounted for 87 per cent of gross profit in the group studied. The position of the utilities has been left virtually untouched in the recently approved National Energy Plan, despite pressure from the parliamentary Opposition.

The decline in profitability has resulted from a combination of the increased cost of credit, drop in domestic demand, higher wages and the need to set aside greater provisions for reserves. The companies doing best in the current recession have been those able to turn more to exports, or alternatively those with protected positions such as the banks.

Because of the continued recession and the failure of the Government and the financial community to press ahead with plans for restructuring the credit system, company results in 1979 are expected to be worse, with more loss makers and an overall downward trend in profitability.

Bonn and oil concerns at odds over profit figures

BY ROGER BOYES IN BONN

WEST GERMAN oil companies, anxious to justify their latest petrol price rises, are at odds with the Government over how they should present their profit figures.

The oil majors have come in for considerable criticism from government bodies, trade unions and consumer associations. The Federal Cartel Office has also held talks with the companies about last month's price rise—which pushed petrol well above the DM 1 per litre level—and expressed scepticism that it was fully justified.

In a bid to stave off some of this criticism, the oil companies have been publishing regular and detailed figures on their own account. But they have also urged the Economics Ministry to release a quarterly review of the crude oil import prices faced by the companies as well as the turnover and profits.

This, they believe, would give more credibility to their claim, demonstrated again yesterday in Deutsche Shell's first half results, that they are making less than one pfennig (100 pfennigs=1DM) profit on a litre of petrol.

Count Otto Lambsdorff, the Economics Minister, is now reported, however, to have resisted issuing regular government figures on the profits of the oil companies, no matter how reassuring this might be for the consumer. The danger is that the Government might become too closely identified with the companies and that the figures would be seen as a seal of approval on their profits.

The oil companies are dissatisfied with this. They have pointed out that some of the social consequences of the price rises—the pressure, for example, from grassroots union members for an "oil" supplement on their wages—could be avoided, if the Government helped explain the reasons for the rises.

Athens police break up union march

By N. J. Michaelson and David Tonge in Athens

HUNDREDS OF haton-wielding policemen last night broke up attempts by unionists to march on Athens University. The union rally had earlier been banned by the authorities.

The ban is the second to be imposed recently and comes after the Government broke a strike of bank clerks by subjecting some of them to military regulations.

The unions planning yesterday's rally represent workers in the banks and public utilities. They were supported by university students and by Mr. Andreas Papanastasiou, head of the opposition Socialist Party. He described the ban as anti-constitutional.

The unions are objecting to, and in some cases refusing to obey, a Government order that working hours should be staggered. The order was designed to reduce traffic congestion and was introduced with little consultation.

The unions are also protesting against wage increases being limited to between 10 and 15 per cent.

Portuguese alliance threatened

By Jimmy Burns in Lisbon

PORTUGAL'S recently formed centre-right alliance could fall apart because of differences over electoral strategy.

Dr. Francisco Sa Carneiro, Professor Diogo Freitas do Amaral, and Dr. Goncalo Ribeiro Telles of the Social Democrat Party, the Christian Democrat Party, and the Popular Monarchist Party have announced an "emergency summit" for today in an attempt to prevent a final split.

The Christian Democrats and the Monarchists, minority parties within the alliance, have attacked the decision of local Social Democrat campaign officials to fight the autumn election with separate lists. Both the Christian Democrats and the Monarchists argue that the credibility of the alliance will be severely damaged unless a common strategy is agreed.

The alliance was formed last month around a broad set of principles which left the details strategy unresolved. The three leaders agreed to bury past rivalries and offer the country a "radical alternative".

Giscard rounds on alcoholism

BY DAVID WHITE IN PARIS

"THE MOST important and the most preoccupying of society's scourges," said the French Cabinet last night to say this week about alcohol.

When the French Cabinet had to say this week about alcohol would be music to Ayatollah Khomeini's ears—that is, if the Ayatollah did not hold similar views about music.

President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing has requested a 10-year programme to combat alcoholism, to be drawn up by next summer.

In a country whose inhabitants can claim to absorb more pure alcohol per head than anybody else, plans to attack the problem are not new. But nothing has materialised in the two years since M. Giscard first broached the issue.

At this week's Cahine meeting he heard M. Jacques Barrot, his new cost-cutting Minister of Health and Social Security, report on the persistence of

alcoholism among Frenchmen, and increasingly among French women, and its "human, social and economic cost".

A working party is being set up under Professor Jean Bernard, a venerable Paris blood specialist and member of the French Academy.

In the meantime, the authorities plan simply to do more of what they are doing already—treating alcoholics, breathalysing motorists, mounting anti-excess campaigns and restricting advertising by drinks companies.

The French are reckoned to lead the world consumption table with an intake in 1975 of 16 litres of pure alcohol per man, woman and child. Apart from the Italians, there are, of course, no wine drinkers like them.

At least 4m people are reckoned to be "excessive drinkers", and 2m are confirmed alcoholics out of a total population of almost 53m. The effects of alcohol are the third cause of death in France, after heart diseases and cancer.

But the importance of wines and spirits in the rural economy makes the question of control a delicate one.

Wine-growers, concerned about the prospect of excess production this year, when the harvest is expected to be nearly 20 per cent higher than last year's, at 70m hectolitres, are spared this additional worry until Prof. Bernard's team comes up with its package of measures in mid-1980.

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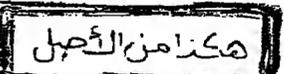


The Bayer Cross - one of the oldest and most familiar trade-marks in the world. Friedrich Bayer started his paint and dyestuff business in Wuppertal-Barmen 116 years ago. For the last 75 years the Bayer Cross has been the Company's trade-mark. Today, close to 180,000 employees all over the world contribute to the strengths associated with the Bayer Cross: quality, reliability, and a reputation for solving problems. More than 6,000 products - basic chemicals, plastics, plant protection agents, pharmaceutical products, dyestuffs, man-made fibres, pigments and chemical agents - are the fruits of intensive research and development. Bayer employs 6,000 scientists in R & D alone. The results for 1978 and the progress in 1979 to date reflect the continued confidence placed in Bayer, its products and services.

In 1978 Bayer further expanded its position in world markets. The foreign affiliates were particularly successful. Turnover Bayer World: DM 22,836 million. Share of foreign production and export: 70%. Turnover Bayer AG: 9,972 million. Export: 59.2%. Bayer World investment in fixed assets: DM 1,727 million, of which DM 1,113 million in Germany. Research expenditure worldwide: DM 1 billion, i.e. roughly 5% of turnover. Post-tax profits: Bayer World DM 467 million, Bayer AG DM 306 million. Dividend 1978: DM 6.- per share of DM 50 nominal - a total payout of DM 256 million to some 420,000 shareholders. In the first five months of 1979 turnover of Bayer AG rose by 14%, the development of Bayer World during the same period continued favourably with a 13% rise in turnover.

For further information on the Bayer Group please contact Bayer AG, Vorstandsstab Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, D-5090 Leverkusen, West Germany, or Bayer U.K. Ltd., PR Department, Bayer House, 18-24 Paradise Road, Richmond/Surrey TW9 1SJ, Great Britain.

Bayer Aktiengesellschaft Leverkusen



AMERICAN NEWS

صكنا من الأرحل

BY KEVIN DONE

Mobile missile basing plan put to Carter

BY DAVID BUCHAN IN WASHINGTON

THE U.S. Defence Department is reported to have put to President Carter its recommendation that the planned \$300m MX Mobile Missile system should be ferried around by launchers on sites in the states of Utah and Nevada. President Carter is expected shortly to announce a final decision on the basing of the MX system, in good time to influence the Senate debate on the SALT II treaty with the Soviet Union. The expensive MX system, which is designed to make American land-based missiles less vulnerable to Soviet attack, is the one new system that the U.S. can build under the treaty. Mr. Carter has already announced his intention to build the mobile MX missiles. But firm decision on how it is to be based may be necessary to sway some senators, disturbed by what they saw as the President's earlier preparations on defence projects, such as the cancellation of the B-1 bomber and postponement of the neutron bomb. The recommendation of Mr. Harold Brown, the Defence Secretary, and his department is that the 10-warhead MX missiles should be circulated around "trajectories" between hard sites. The Russians would thus find it difficult or impossible to target the missiles precisely. The Department considered other options to achieve the same end.

Concern over growth in heating oil stocks

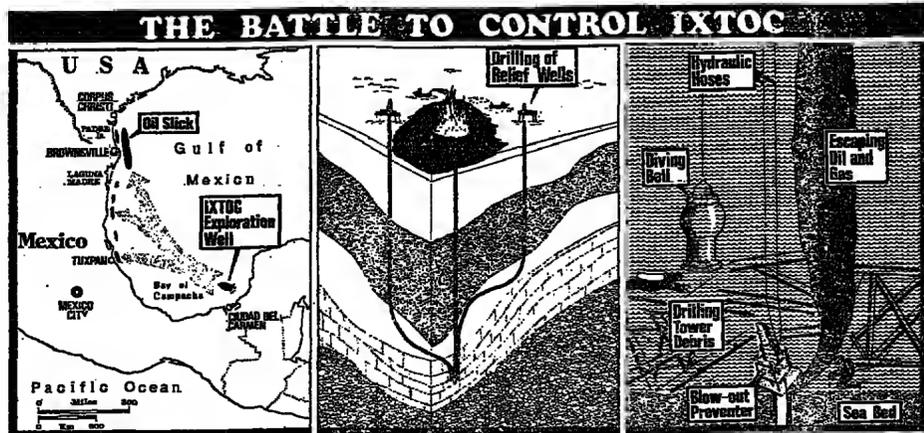
BY DAVID LASCELLES IN NEW YORK

CONCERN is growing in Washington and in the petroleum industry about slow growth in stocks of distillates (the broad petroleum category which includes heating oil). The Administration has set a target of 240m barrels by October. However, according to the latest statistics released by the American Petroleum Institute for the week ending August 3, stocks stood at 186.9m, compared with 180.5m at the same time last year. Moreover, these stocks should be increasing at a rate of 7m barrels a week to achieve the target. In the week of the latest report, there was an increase of only 2m barrels. A House Subcommittee reported on Wednesday that many distributors around the country are behind on deliveries to households because of delays in supplies from the refiners. It concluded that the 240m target may not be reached. A clearer idea of the state of heating oil supplies should emerge today when the Federal Oil Jobbers Council releases the results of the first survey undertaken of stocks in the hands of local distributors and household storage tanks. It will also draw comparisons with stocks this time last year.

ENERGY REVIEW: THE IXTOC OIL DISASTER

Mexican blow-out on an epic scale

FOR MORE than two months a volatile mixture of crude oil and gas has been billowing to the surface of Mexico's Gulf of Campeche from the broken Ixtoc 1 well-head, 170 feet below on the seabed. The accident is fast becoming one of the world's biggest ever oil disasters, surpassing even the sinking of the Amoco Cadiz tanker in the English Channel last year. The immediate effects of the blow-out are not as obvious as the tanker disaster, partly because the accident occurred about 58 miles from the nearest coast and partly because a significant proportion of the oil and gas is burning into the atmosphere as it reaches the surface of the sea. But crude oil is still gushing from the well at a rate of some 20,000 barrels or 700,000 gallons a day. Some of the oil is being retrieved from the sea near the scene of the blow-out, but inevitably much is still escaping and patches of the vast broken slicks which now cover hundreds of square miles, have been blown more than 500 miles across the Gulf of Mexico, finally fetching up this week on the beaches of southern Texas.



try to corral the oil and scoop it from the surface, much of the crude that is not burning or evaporating is still escaping to threaten marine life and far-away coastlines. A fleet of aircraft is being used to bomb the oil slicks with chemical dispersants, but there are fears that the chemicals may be as harmful to sea life as the oil itself. And unless present forlorn attempts to seal the well from the top meet with unexpected success, it could be October before relief wells are drilled down to the Ixtoc formation to start sealing the well from the bottom.

Fresh doubts

Within Mexico itself the Campeche blow-out is giving rise to fresh doubts about the pace at which the whole oil industry is being developed and it is throwing a particular cloud over the future of Pemex's charismatic director-general, Sr Jorge Diaz Serrano, who has been talked of as a future presidential candidate. Work on Ixtoc 1 was started on December 10 last year with the drilling contracted out to Permargo (Perforaciones Mar del Golfo) a Mexican company of which Sr. Diaz Serrano himself was one of the founder members. He claimed recently that he sold all his shares in the company and severed any connections with it in October, 1975. In its turn Permargo contracted in the U.S. semi-submersible drilling rig, Sedco 135.

By June 2, after nearly six months' drilling, when the well was already 2 1/2 miles (3,627 metres) deep, the work ran into trouble. During the day as the drill-bit bored down through the rock workers on the rig noticed significant loss of pressure in the drilling mud that was being pumped down the well.

While drilling is in progress a special kind of "mud" usually made of clay and water with the addition of various chemicals, is pumped down through the hollow drill pipe, coming out at the bottom through holes in the drilling bit. A powerful stream of mud is returned to the surface through the space between the drill pipe and wall of the borehole.

The mud keeps the drill bit cool, it brings up rock samples to the surface for study by geologists and it may give the first indications of an imminent oil or gas find. Most important it is also used to balance the pressures from the rock formations that are being drilled through.

According to a report recently released by the Mexican Attorney General's office mud pressure was lost at Ixtoc three times on June 2 and on each occasion work was suspended for a few hours. Drilling engineers on the rig were clearly perplexed by the loss of pressure. They decided to withdraw the 11,899 feet of drill pipe, in order to change the drilling bit and they prepared more than 100 cubic yards of mud to pump into the well to hold it stable. For 6 1/2 hours the

well was closely watched and there was no sign of movement. By 3 a.m. in the still dark hours of the early morning of June 3 only the last 630 ft of the drill pipe remained in the hole when disaster struck. Suddenly without warning the mud began to be forced back up the well. The first trickle quickly built up into a jet of mud, oil and gas. In less than 15 minutes the volatile mixture had exploded and was on fire turning the rig into a burning torii.

Misfortune

In this short space of time the drilling company suffered one major piece of misfortune according to the Attorney General's investigation. The drillers tried to activate the blow-out preventer (BOP) located down at the well-head on the sea floor. Within the BOP there are metal rams that can be operated hydraulically from the surface. They should be able to smash through the drill pipe and shut off the well automatically.

But the drill-pipe had been almost completely withdrawn from the hole. Remaining between the rams was the far thicker and stronger steel drill collar, which the rams were unable to smash. The well went out of control.

The 63-man crew rapidly abandoned the rig as the fire began to melt the drilling tower. The metal superstructure collapsed in the intense heat and plunged to the seabed. Much of it fell across the well-

head on the sea-floor causing serious damage by bending the well-head.

During the first 24 hours after the blow-out the remains of the drilling rig were towed clear of the site. Since then Pemex has been following two distinct courses of action to try to stem the flow of burning oil and gas.

Underwater inspection, first by remote-controlled television cameras and later by a manned mini-submarine and by divers showed that the well-head blow-out preventer was not a complete write-off. It could still be used perhaps to try to shut off the well. Despite swirling underwater currents divers succeeded in attaching hydraulic hoses to the well-head and on June 24, the rams were closed.

Mud and gelatin were pumped into the top of the well, the flow was cut off and the fire burning on the surface of the sea was extinguished. But as cement began to be pumped into the well-head, a second surge of oil and gas gushed out of the well from a rupture below the blow-out preventer. On the surface of the sea the jet of oil and gas was deliberately set on fire again to try to cut down the pollution.

Since early July Pemex has continued to try to seal the well from the top through hoses attached to the well head, but the attempt appears forlorn. It is injecting whatever solid material it can force into the top of the well ranging from golf balls to small 2-3 inch steel

balls, but much of the material is being ejected with the oil.

The main hope of controlling Ixtoc was in the drilling of two relief wells to the same depth as the existing well. Mud and cement can then be pumped down to the hope that this will be sucked up into the Ixtoc well where it will seal hard and seal off the flow of oil and gas. But that is a long process. The first relief well was begun on June 11 and is unlikely to be completed before the second half of September. The second was started on July 1 and will not be finished before the beginning of October.

Pollution

For seven weeks from June 3 Pemex estimates that oil was gushing from Ixtoc at the rate of 30,000 barrels or more than 1m gallons a day along with 15m cubic feet a day of gas. Since July 23 the flow has been restricted a little to 20,000 barrels a day. Of this Pemex claims that about 10,000 b/d are being burned, 5,000 b/d are evaporating, about 1,000 b/d are being recovered and the rest is spreading out in a widening stain over the Gulf.

The real impact on the ecology of the Gulf will not be known for many months, but the visible pollution already covers many hundreds of square miles with the oil fetching up in small tar balls as far away as the beaches of South Texas.

The official verdict of the Mexican Attorney General has cleared all the individuals working on the Sedco 135 rig of blame for the blow-out. The accident was caused, says the report, by a "natural phenomenon" that could not have been foreseen. The original loss of mud pressure was caused by the drill-bit entering an underground cavern. The force of the drill-bit plunging through this hollow broke the seal of the oil reservoir and set off the surge of crude and gas to the surface.

The silver lining to the blow-out is that the Ixtoc well has discovered a major new oil field—reserves of at least 800m barrels have been talked of—and the crude is much lighter and more attractive than most of the earlier offshore finds. Ixtoc will certainly play a part in raising again Mexico's total of proven reserves. But that is little consolation for those living around the Gulf who make their living from mesos other than oil as they watch the mounting pollution spill out across the Gulf of Mexico.

Roldos takes over in Ecuador

BY SARITA KENDALL IN QUITO

MR. CYRUS VANCE, U.S. Secretary of State, will discuss the situation in Central America with leaders of Latin American states, including Mrs. Violeta Barrios Chamorro of the Nicaraguan junta, during his visit to Ecuador. More than 30 countries have sent representatives to today's inauguration of President Jaime Roldos Aguilera, which marks Ecuador's return to democracy after nine years, and to civilian rule after seven. Among the heads of state in Quito are President Julio Cesar Turbay of Colombia, and President Luis Herrera Campins of Venezuela, as well as the foreign ministers of Peru, Argentina and Chile.

As Sr. Roldos takes over, the new constitution chosen by referendum last year comes into force and Congress begins its first session in nine years. Sr. Roldos' Popular Forces Party has the most seats, with more than a third of the total. Sr. Assad Bucaram, the party leader, hazed from running for the presidency by legal technicality, is expected to be elected leader of congress as the result of a much criticised pact with the Conservative Party. Though there has been no overt split in the Popular Forces, relations between "Roldosistas" and "Bucaramistas" are known to be tense and could affect the future government's effectiveness.



President Jaime Roldos Aguilera... leads Ecuador back to democracy today after nine years

DC-10 short-cut defended

CHICAGO — Aircraft manufacturer McDonnell Douglas never explicitly disapproved of a short-cut maintenance procedure blamed for the crash of an American Airlines DC-10, one of the airline's engineers told an inquiry yesterday.

The DC-10 crashed last May at O'Hare Airport in Chicago, killing 273 people, when an engine tore loose as it took off. Investigators believed that the left engine ripped off because the pylon attaching it to the wing had been accidentally cracked by American Airlines mechanics during maintenance two months before the crash. The mechanics used a fork-lift truck to detach the engine and pylon from the wing together, and not separately as recommended in the McDonnell

Douglas service manual. Mr. William Fey, the American Airlines engineer who developed the one-step fork lift procedure, said that he consulted McDonnell Douglas in advance and "got the feeling they did not approve." But he added later that McDonnell

Douglas "did not advise me they did not approve." Mr. Fey said that one McDonnell Douglas official had even indicated that the fork lift method might be adopted by the DC-10 builder if it proved workable. Reuter

Brazil halts travel deposit

BRASILIA — An \$824 compulsory deposit with the central bank required of all Brazilians travelling abroad will be lifted on January 1, 1980. The measure, first applied in July 1976, was aimed at reducing Brazilian spending overseas and raising money for tourist development, the Govern-

ment said. The announcement came a day after an official visit by Sr. Adolf Suarez, the Spanish Prime Minister, who complained that the travel deposit prevented Spanish immigrants in Brazil from visiting their families at home. AP-DJ

Muhammed Hamaludin reports on Guyana's resurgent Left-wing opposition. A new force of militants and intellectuals

THE MILITANT Working People's Alliance (WPA) has declared itself Guyana's newest left-wing political party, and immediately pledged to have a showdown with the ruling People's National Congress (PNC) before the end of the year. The circumstances could not be more opportune, from the viewpoint of the five-year-old WPA. It is caught up in a verbal war with the Congress following the fire-bombing on July 11 of two big Government buildings—one housing the PNC's secretariat—and the fatal stabbing three days later of a Jesuit priest in street violence. Insults have been exchanged as the two organisations take to the street corners in the cities and in towns on the bauxite belt, where both claim strong support. The Alliance dubs the ruling party "an illegal minority clique" and is in turn described by the Congress as "counter-revolutionaries" and mercenaries of foreign interests who have "launched a counter-revolution" in Guyana. The political unrest has coincided with a period of severe economic difficulty: recovery measures coupled to two International Monetary Fund loans, have been bitterly criticised by the Alliance and other Left-wing groups; although they have clearly arrested the downturn which began in 1976. The Alliance has been hammering away at these issues, as well as the standing

allegation by all opposition parties that the PNC is guilty of electoral irregularities and undemocratic practices. The Alliance has been drawing crowds estimated at between 2,000 and 3,000, an encouraging size. But the Alliance has done painstaking work over the past five years as one of the severest critics of the Government. It was formed by the alliance of four small fringe groups, but it has cut loose from all of them and boasts individual identity and a collective leadership. The first two groups, led by Mr. Eusi Kwayana (formerly Sydney King) and Mr. Moses Bogaevan respectively, brought to the coalition the experiences of seasoned politicians, as did the WWP led by Mr. Brindley Benn. The Ratoon Group lent intellectual support in the form of young university radicals. Mr. Kwayana has been involved in Guyanese politics for over 25 years. From with the older People's Progressive Party (PPP), now headed by Dr. Cheddi Jagan, the Opposition leader and former premier, and then, after the split in the PPP in 1955, with Mr. Forbes Burnham, the Prime Minister, and from which he subsequently broke away. Mr. Bhagwan, a lawyer, was a close aide of Dr. Jagan's but quit the PPP to form his own organisation. Mr. Benn, a deputy Premier in Dr. Jagan's Government, split from him on ideo-

logical issues and formed his Maoist WWPV. The Alliance, however, owes much to the presence of the Ratoon Intellectuals, who have built up a reputation for Left-wing militancy along the lines of several similar groups in other parts of the Caribbean—Grenada's New Jewel Movement, for example. The Ratoon leader is Guyana's foremost Marxist economist, Professor Clive Thomas. Another leading figure is an historian, Dr. Walter Rodney, who has been denied the history chair at the local university. Another is Dr. Joshua Ramassamy, a university lecturer who was the target of a daylight assassination attempt by still unidentified gunmen some years ago. The Alliance has the appearance of a genuine bridge across the racial barrier in Guyana, and a firm link with the country's intelligentsia. In a round-up of suspects after the July 11 fire-bombing incidents, a number of WPA militants were held in custody for up to 72 hours, and this brought a sharp reaction from the respected academic board of the university, which said that the rights of academics had been trampled on for years, and this was only the latest "violation." The missing link in the Alliance is a labour base, but some observers suspect that it has been attempting to build this among university, commer-



Dr. Forbes Burnham... faces new opposition

There is little doubt that its strategy is to force the Government's resignation by mobilising the urban masses, as happened, for example, in Grenada and Dominica. It has announced that plans are being drawn up by a broad-based opposition grouping, of which it is a leading part, for a "civil resistance and civil disobedience" campaign along the lines of Kwame Nkrumah's "positive action" programme. The ruling party has naturally responded by sharply denouncing the Alliance and its objectives. This attack is sustained in the pro-Government media and in street corner meetings. However it is not yet clear what the Government will do to counter what most Guyanese see as a direct challenge to the Administration's authority. The Government believes that the revolution started by the ruling PNC is at stake and must be defended from the mob. The media have carried broad hints that preventive detention, under the National Security Act, is being considered. But there has been no official statement. The Government and PNC party position has so far been tied to warnings that the authorities would not allow a return to the communal violence of earlier years. It is also unknown how the Marxist PPP would respond to any genuine attempt to topple the Government.

NOTICE OF REDEMPTION In the Holders of Esso Overseas Finance N.V. 9% Guaranteed Debentures Due 1985 NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to the provisions of the Indenture dated as of September 15, 1970 providing for the above Debentures, said Debentures aggregating \$1,500,000 principal amount have been selected for redemption on September 15, 1979 through operation of the Sinking Fund at the redemption price of 100% of the principal amount thereof, together with accrued interest to said date, as follows: Outstanding Debentures of \$1000 each of prefix "M" bearing the distinctive numbers ending in any of the following two digits: 01 05 12 17 24 37 47 55 63 71 77 79 83 85 Also outstanding Debentures of prefix "M" bearing the following numbers: 5 1170 3070 4270 5670 6770 7770 8970 11370 12570 14370 15170 16670 17470 1870 3170 3470 4670 6170 6970 7970 8770 10170 11170 12170 13170 14170 15170 16170 17170 18170 2470 2670 3970 5470 6370 7270 8270 10170 11270 12270 14170 14970 16270 17370 Payment will be made upon presentation and surrender of the above Debentures with coupons due September 15, 1980 and subsequent coupons attached at the main offices of any of the following: Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, 30 West Broadway, New York, New York, New York 10015; Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York in Brussels, Frankfurt am Main, London, Paris and Zurich; Banca Vovviller & C. S.p.A. in Milan and Rome; Bank Mees & Hope N.V. in Amsterdam; and Kredietbank S.A. Luxembourgise in Luxembourg. Coupons due September 15, 1979 should be detached and collected in the usual manner. On and after September 15, 1979 interest shall cease to accrue on the Debentures selected for redemption. ESSO OVERSEAS FINANCE N.V. Dated: August 10, 1979 The following Debentures previously called for redemption have not as yet been presented for payment: 70 1915 2745 4491 5411 6244 6461 6589 6604 7921 11650 13486 17568 18426 18632 19458 101 2129 4262 4584 5513 6234 6474 6973 6985 7625 11862 13747 17581 18449 18634 19502 883 2254 4839 4839 5528 6275 6917 6978 8406 8823 9282 12712 13747 17581 18449 18634 19502 555 2337 4419 4862 6152 6285 6485 6574 6772 6814 12538 18622 17581 18449 18634 19502 1387 2016 4428 4986 6128 6284 6517 6583 6776 6813 12538 18622 17581 18449 18634 19502 1688 3019 4486 5194 6127 6447 6646 6682 6776 6813 12538 18622 17581 18449 18634 19502 1719 3029 4489 5404 6124 6451 6582 6689 7520 10720 12825 16030 17748 18631 19467

OVERSEAS NEWS

WORLD TRADE NEWS

Tehran assembly to open as poll protests continue

BY ANDREW WHITLEY IN TEHRAN

IRAN'S Constituent Assembly is due to open tomorrow. Wide-spread protests are continuing over the manner in which the elections to it were held a week ago.

Maraghei as voices independent of the conservative clergy. The turnout at the polls appears to have been much lower than the Government or Ayatollah Khomeini would have liked.

Irregularities and for a clear signal from Shariat-Madari. Much of the interest in the assembly is likely to focus on the strength of the fundamentalist demand for considerable re-writing of the draft constitution to bring it into line with Islamic principles.



New hope of E. African co-operation

By John Worrall in Nairobi

ONE BY-PRODUCT of the Commonwealth Summit could be the start of a new era in East African regional co-operation after years of stagnation.

W. Germany being urged to step up coal imports

BY ROGER BOYES IN BONN

THE West German Government is being urged to step up its imports of coal in order to cope with its ambitious coal-gasification and liquefaction plans for the 1980s.

THE West German Government is being urged to step up its imports of coal in order to cope with its ambitious coal-gasification and liquefaction plans for the 1980s.

domestic production could be increased about 7 per cent—this accounting for 23-25 per cent of West German energy needs—in the 1980s.

Egyptair facing deadline on DC-10

McDONNELL-DOUGLAS has told Egyptair it will not be extending its August 15 deadline for the payment of a \$5.8m (£2.6m) refundable "good faith" payment originally due in April for four DC-10-30 wide-bodied aircraft the airline has contracted to buy.

After the Chicago air crash in May, McDonnell-Douglas agreed to a number of extensions of the deadline, but interest has been accruing on the payment since June 11.

Soaring deposits at Iran bank

BY OUR TEHRAN CORRESPONDENT

DEPOSITS HELD by Bank Mellī, Iran's biggest bank have risen by 204bn rials (£1.2bn) in the five months since the revolution.

revolutionary turmoil. Also its predominance over the other banks (now nationalised) appears to have increased.

dropped by R37bn since the start of the financial year, 11 months earlier.

Singapore GDP grows by 9.7%

BY GEORGIE LEE IN SINGAPORE

SINGAPORE REGISTERED a real economic growth rate of 9.7 per cent in the first half of this year.

than 8 per cent for the whole of this year is predicted against 8.6 per cent for the whole of 1979.

Industrial production, boosted by advances in electronics, electricals and petroleum refining, expanded at an annual rate of 17.4 per cent, compared with 9.4 per cent in the first half of last year.

Australia may cut textiles aid

THE AUSTRALIAN Industries Assistance Commission has recommended changes to the methods of protection of Australia's textile, clothing and footwear industries, aimed at forcing inefficient companies out of business.

that the recommendations were only a draft and still subject to alteration by the IAC itself.

Norway wins hydro contract

BY FAY GJETER IN OSLO

STANDARD TELEFON og Kabelfabrik of Norway has secured more than half of a \$200m contract to supply and lay high-voltage submarine cables between the Canadian mainland and Vancouver Island for the British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority.

Denmark. The cable-laying ship, Skagerak, specially built for that job, will be employed on the Canadian project.

Four cables will be laid, side by side, over a distance of nearly 40 kilometres, and total transmission capacity will be 3,200 mw.

Manila diesel plant talks continue

BY DANIEL NELSON IN MANILA

THE PHILIPPINES government's talks with Berlin and Mainz of West Germany on the establishment of two diesel engine plants have progressed to the point where the extent of local content is now the main outstanding subject.

Mr. Robert Ongpin, Minister of Industry, told the Financial Times that negotiations were continuing, mainly on the details. Incentives are understood to be among these.

to Kenyan businessmen the continued closure of the border with Tanzania seems an unnecessary interruption of normal trading patterns.

VIETNAM'S PROBLEMS MOUNT

Defection another blow to Hanoi

BY NAYAN CHANDA, RECENTLY IN HANOI

FOR THE first time in the 49 years' history of the Vietnamese Communist Party, a senior leader has defected to the enemy.

dropped from the Central Committee and removed from the position of Chairman of the Minorities Commission.

at the Geneva Conference will be a drop in the bucket in view of the size of the problem.



Mr. Hoang Van Hoan (left) pictured in Peking yesterday just hours after the Chinese Government acknowledged his defection from Vietnam.

Mr. Hoang Van Hoan (left) pictured in Peking yesterday just hours after the Chinese Government acknowledged his defection from Vietnam.

EAST EUROPEAN TRADE

West cautious over Soviet car venture

BY KENNETH GOODING, MOTOR INDUSTRY CORRESPONDENT

THE SOVIET Union wants to put a new family saloon on the road as quickly as possible and has had discussions with a handful of Western European manufacturers about the project.

BL of Britain has either been involved or not.

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Poland's aircraft industry comes of age

BY LESLIE COLT IN BERLIN

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West cautious over Soviet car venture

BY KENNETH GOODING, MOTOR INDUSTRY CORRESPONDENT

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About three out of ten of the cars produced would be exported and the Russians point out that the Western producers could easily absorb the 60,000 to 70,000 cars a year involved into their European networks.

The talks have dragged on and on, mainly it appears, because the Russians are offering a relatively poor deal.

The Russian car, based on the old Fiat 124, is being produced at the rate of more than 700,000 a year; Fiat did not seem pleased when the car, called the Lada, appeared in Western markets at low prices.

The latest indications are that the USSR has shelved plans for an actual expansion of its car-making capacity, which would have involved the Togliatti plant, because the raw materials, particularly steel, are needed more urgently elsewhere.

They are quite aware, though, that the Russians are only interested in outside help because they have run out of domestic design and engineering capability.

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Poland has now exported more than 8,000 Antonov 2 transport aircraft, which are built at the industry's Mielec factory under licence from the Soviet Union.

Poland's broadening contacts with Western aircraft companies, have agreed to let Poland produce sub-assemblies for the Soviet airbus E-95 which is to be put in service in the early 1980s.

Recent successes of Poland's aviation industry—known, as nearly everything else is, in Polish industry by its initials PZL—includes sales of aircraft engines to the United States as well as a contract with Moscow to supply sub-assemblies for the Soviet airbus, the Ilyushin 86.

The modern Polish aircraft industry had its origins in the darkest days of the Second World War when the Soviet Union commissioned plants in the liberated part of Poland to repair Soviet-built fighter aircraft.

The Poles also have ties with Piper Aircraft of the U.S. and they are preparing to produce the M-20 Mewa, an American-designed two-engine executive aircraft of the Piper Seneca II type.

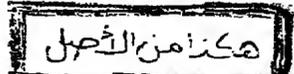
Plants in Mielec and Swidnik have begun production of control surfaces, parts of control gears as well as slots, flaps and ailerons.

There is no way of stopping the refugee flow unless serious efforts are made to improve the quality of life in Vietnam.

The other main line of aircraft Poland produces for Comecon use is agricultural models. PZL has cooperated

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UK NEWS

TEN YEARS AGO THE EMERGENCY BEGAN, AND TROOPS WERE SENT IN...

Plans to cut attractions of not working

THE GOVERNMENT is working on plans to widen the gap between the earnings of people in work and the unemployed...

Post Office creates research division

A NEW postal operation and research division is being formed in the Post Office. This move is seen as preparatory to the division of the corporation into two businesses...

Strikes cause slight fall in July vehicle output

Both car and commercial vehicle production eased back from June levels last month but remained ahead of output in July last year.

Ferry survey move on Tunnel

THE GOVERNMENT has commissioned a survey of motorists using cross-Channel ferries in a first move towards evaluating the prospects for a Channel Tunnel.

Follow the AA sign to Moscow

THREE AUTOMOBILE Association motorists experts set off from Britain yesterday to chart an overland route for British motorists to the Moscow 1980 Olympics.

Violence again in Belfast

VIOLENCE WHICH security forces in Ulster feared would mark the anniversaries falling this week returned to the streets of Belfast yesterday.

Parades

Temperatures were raised further by Provisional Sinn Fein, the IRA political wing, which spoke of plans to barricade streets in the Bogside.

Two brokers dominated big gilts purchase

A LARGE part of the £400m to £600m nominal of the tap stock sold on Wednesday went to clients of two stockbrokers.

The U.S. lobby for Irish peace

THE PAST seven days have scarcely been a fruitful period for Anglo-American exchanges on the Ulster problem, writes John Wyles from New York.

Moderates

Mr. O'Neill's public call in May for a ban on handgun sales to the RUC might seem to contradict this, but Mr. O'Neill believes that if the U.S. is to be of any help to bringing peace to Ulster, then it must not be seen to be supporting the interests of one side against the other.

Egypt facing deadline on DCA Optimistic forecast for oil supplies

By Ray Daffer, Energy Editor. AN OPTIMISTIC forecast that I could remain the main source of energy into at least the second quarter of the next century was made yesterday at the International Banking Summer school in Cambridge.

Sunderland may land ship order

By Lynton McLain. SUNDERLAND Shipbuilders, which lost almost £2m last year and is working on its last four ships on order, may be about to win an order for two 31,000 deadweight ton bulk carriers.

July steel output up

By John Lloyd. UK STEEL production last month rose over July last year, while production over the first seven months of this year is also up on the same period in 1978.

Accountancy 'scapegoat' tactics attacked

By Michael Lafferty, Banking Correspondent. PROFESSIONAL accountancy bodies were accused yesterday of using members who have been convicted of criminal offences as scapegoats to preserve their professional image.

New Issue August 10, 1979

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK Manila, Philippines DM 100,000,000 7 1/4% Deutsche Mark Bonds of 1979/1989

Interest: 7 1/4% p. a., payable on August 1 of each year
Offering Price: 99 1/4%
Repayment: on August 1, 1989 at par
Listing: Frankfurt am Main and Düsseldorf

- Dresdner Bank, Deutsche Bank, Commerzbank, Westdeutsche Landesbank Girozentrale, A.E. Ames & Co., Arnold and S. Bleicher, Banca Commerciale Italiana, Bank Julius Baer International Limited, Banque Arabe et Internationale d'Investissement (S.A.I.I.), Banque Générale du Luxembourg S.A., Banque Nationale de Paris, Banque Populaire Suisse S.A. Luxembourg, Bayerische Hypotheken- und Wechsel-Bank Aktiengesellschaft, Joh. Berenberg, Gossler & Co., Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations, Crédit Commercial de France, Creditanstalt-Bankverein, DB Finance (Hong Kong) Ltd., DG Bank, Deutsche Genossenschaftsbank, European Banking Company Limited, Girozentrale und Bank der Österreichischen Sparkassen Aktiengesellschaft, Hamburgische Landesbank - Girozentrale - Hill Samuel & Co. Limited, Istituto Bancario San Paolo di Torino, Kreditbank N.V., Kuwait Foreign Trading Contracting & Investment Co. (S.A.K.), Landesbank Rheinland-Pfalz - Girozentrale, Manufacturers Hanover Limited, Merrill Lynch International & Co., Morgan Stanley International Limited, Nomura Europe N.V., Österreichische Länderbank Aktiengesellschaft, Privatbanken Aktiengesellschaft, J. Henry Schroder Wagg & Co. Limited, Smith Barney, Harris Upham & Co. Incorporated, Svenska Handelsbanken, Union Bank of Switzerland (Securities) Limited, S.G. Warburg & Co. Ltd., Wood Gundy Limited, Yamaichi International (Europe) Limited

# Changes in rateable value system urged

BY ANDREW TAYLOR

THE GOVERNMENT should carry out a major overhaul of the system used to fix household rateable values, the Association of Metropolitan Authorities said yesterday.

Mrs Rita Hale, the association's under-secretary for finance, was particularly critical of the wide discrepancies between rateable values in different parts of the country.

The AMA and other local authority associations have attacked the Government for its decision to cancel the rating revaluation planned for 1982—the first since 1973.

Mrs Hale said yesterday that his "breathing space" should now be used for an urgent review of the valuation system.

Figures produced by the Inland Revenue reveal the incredibly wide variation in domestic rate bills between one

part of the country and another. "How much you pay in rates depends not only on the rate in the pound the local authority levies, but on the rateable value put on your property by the Inland Revenue and these can vary tremendously.

"For example, the rateable value of a standard domestic property in Mid-Glamorgan is set at £139, whereas in Hertfordshire it is £277. In metropolitan districts there is a range from £162 in Barnsley to £239 in Wolverhampton."

The problem is more acute in London, says the AMA. Standard rateable values range from £255 in Bexley to £658 in Westminster, and the association is to press for a fairer deal for London ratepayers whose domestic rates were on average about 40 per cent higher than the rest of the country.

The regional discrepancies in rateable values were a major factor behind the wide differences between rate bills in different parts of the country.

The level of rateable value also affected the amount of rate support grant paid by central government, says Mrs Hale.

"London suffers particularly badly on this count. Because rateable values in the capital are so high, it is argued that London local authorities do not need the same proportion of support grant as elsewhere in the country.

"For this reason the Government 'claws back' some of the grant that London would otherwise have received.

"We want measures to be included that will ensure that average domestic rate increases within London next year will be equal to those outside London."

# Health authority asks Jenkin for more time to make cuts

BY LISA WOOD

A LONDON area health authority yesterday announced that it will appeal to Mr. Patrick Jenkin, the Social Services Secretary, against a £3.7m cut in spending.

Members of the Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow AHA have agreed to go ahead with cuts of £1m but want more time to make the other savings.

Last week Mr. Jenkin suspended members of the Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham AHA who refused to implement cuts and replaced them with commissioners.

Mr. Brian Herbert, treasurer of the AHA, said: "We want to see the Secretary of State tell him of our problems and the repercussions of making all the cuts within an eight-month period.

"We are going ahead with cuts of about £1m and we will make detailed proposals for the other £2.7m. But we cannot make these savings without drastic cuts and we want an extension of time to do this—until 1981. We are not saying we are not prepared to do anything, we are merely saying we need more time to do it."

He said the proposed cuts in spending—a reduction of the authority's budget for this year from £82m to £78m—would mean the closure of about 700 beds, redundancies and a reduction

in services.

Mr. Herbert said the position of the Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham AHA members had been discussed by his authority's members. They had decided it was better for the AHA to make savings than to have commissioners brought in who "do not know the area or the services."

The AHA's request will be first examined by the North West Thames Regional Health Authority.

An attempt to stop the South East Thames Regional Health Authority from co-operating with the commissioners in charge of Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham area health authority failed yesterday.

The non-co-operation move was made by Mr. Ted Knight, leader of the Labour-controlled Lambeth council and a member of the RHA.

He warned that the cuts being examined by the commission—brought in by the Government when it suspended the AHA for refusing to make cuts of about £3m—would cause deaths.

But the meeting was told by Mr. David Crouch, Conservative MP for Canterbury, that it would be impossible not to co-operate with the commissioners. He said the Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham authority had a history of overspending.

# Pay body offers catering workers £41.20 minimum

BY NICK GARNETT, LABOUR STAFF

NEW MINIMUM weekly rates of £50 for adult non-service workers and £41.20 for service workers have been fixed by the wages council for staff in licensed hotels and restaurants.

Minimum rates will be £4 higher in London rather than the present £2.40.

The new rates, which will go out for consultation within the industry before becoming statutory obligations, were, however, attacked yesterday by the unions.

"We are still a very long way off our objective of providing a living wage for this grossly exploited group of workers," said Mr. Fred Cooper, national officer of the General and Municipal Workers' Union. He leads the union side in the Licensed Residential Establishment and Licensed Restaurant Wages Council.

The council affects directly and indirectly the pay of more than 300,000 full-time and part-time catering employees.

The six existing grades of non-service workers—which cover cleaners, lift attendants,

hutchers and other groups—will be amalgamated into one grade on a minimum of £50 outside London. Present minimums for these grades are £40.40 to £42.50.

The three service grades, covering staff who would normally be in a position to receive tips and include waiters, porters and cloakroom attendants, are also to be grouped into one grade on a minimum outside London of £41.20.

Adult rates will be paid from the age of 20 rather than 21. Minimum rates for younger staff are being raised pro rata but will still be considerably lower than the adult rate.

Of all the groups, the chambermaids have come out best from the settlement, which was proposed by the employers side, supported by the independents on the wages council but voted against by the unions.

Chambermaids are to be reclassified as non-service rather than service workers, so their minimum pay in the provinces will be raised from £33.60 to £50.

Overtime for all staff will be paid at time and a half after 40 hours instead of time and a quarter for the first four hours. Bank holiday pay at double time has been restored for part-time workers.

Deductions for meals are not being increased but there is a 25 per cent rise—up to £13 a week—on deductions for full board.

The union side is questioning or appealing against a number of items in the proposed settlement, including the classification as full-time worker for those staff who work 40 hours rather than the present 32.

The unions had been seeking a minimum of £65 and have failed to achieve improvements in a number of areas, including payments for "spreadover" shifts.

"This package is disappointing," said Mr. Cooper. "While the percentage seems large, we are still in the position where most people in this industry will need to claim supplementary benefits in order to live."

# Micro-electronics 'may lack trainees'

BY ELAINE WILLIAMS

THE ELECTRONICS industry is concerned about the future of a £12m micro-processor training scheme to be run by the Department of Education.

Since the election, the scheme has been under review in light of the Government's plans to cut spending in education and science by £55m.

The Department announced the scheme in March, when a consultative document was sent to industry. The training programme would cover England, Scotland and Wales.

The previous Government stressed the importance of

training people to meet future needs. A reduction in the range of the scheme could affect the country's ability to exploit the micro-electronics field.

The fate of a £40m optoelectronics support scheme planned to be run by the Department of Industry, also announced last March, is not known. This scheme would provide finance for companies wishing to use optoelectronics (electronics associated with light, such as lasers and optical fibres) and would work on similar lines to the present micro-electronics support scheme.

# Czech civil rights snub for Labour

By Philip Rawstone

THE Czech Ambassador in London has refused to meet a Labour Party delegation to discuss the treatment of civil rights campaigners in his country.

Members of Labour's national executive, who requested the meeting, were accused of "gross interference in the internal affairs of Czechoslovakia."

The NEC last month passed a resolution condemning the arrest of Charter '77 supporters in Czechoslovakia as "the most serious act of repression" in that country since the 1950s.

It was decided then that Miss Joan Lester, Mr. Anthony Wedgwood Benn and Mr. Alex Kilson, should inform the Czech Ambassador of the party's "grave concern" over the issue.

Miss Lester said yesterday that the unprecedented refusal to meet the delegation was "a setback" for all those genuinely concerned about detente and co-operation in Europe.

She added: "We shall not give up, however. We shall continue to press our point of view wherever and whenever we can."

# Matthews reconsiders Daily Star's future

BY JOHN LLOYD

MR. VICTOR MATTHEWS, chairman of Express Newspapers, said yesterday that he was "looking carefully" at the future of the Daily Star. He would not invest further in it while there was no agreement to print in London as well as Manchester.

"People think it's essential that we continue to publish newspapers," he said. "It's not essential. I'm looking at the bottom line."

Mr. Matthews said that investment in the Star had been substantial and that "it isn't winning money, that's for sure. I would not go so far as to say that its future is in doubt. But it is very desirable to come to London, and I'm taking a straight commercial view of the paper."

Earlier this week, Mr. Jocelyn Stevens, managing director of Express Newspapers, managed to obtain agreement from distri-

bution workers to continue handling the Star in the south of England. This followed a rejection by machine managers at the Daily Express of an offer of extra payments to print the Star on Express machines.

The machine managers, members of the National Graphical Association, are looking for payments amounting to £50 extra a week, and extra staff for a machine room. Express says that these demands, together with "knock-on" effects, would increase the cost of printing in London by £1m.

Both sides now appear pessimistic about reaching agreement. Mr. Bill Booroff, the NGA's London regional secretary, said that London printing was unlikely. Mr. Matthews said yesterday that "in view of the demands being made, it isn't on to move. It doesn't mean the end of the paper, but there must be some give and take."

# Threat of hospital action

Financial Times Reporter

HOSPITALS and clinics throughout the UK could again be hit by industrial action, the National and Local Government Officers' Association (NALGO) said yesterday.

The warning came after a breakdown of talks at a meeting of the "White" group, which is responsible for negotiating wages and conditions.

NALGO has 3,000 members employed as area and district works officers, which is 70 per cent of the total staff employed in these posts.

Talks broke down because no agreement could be reached on the 1979 pay award nor on consolidation of bonus allowances.

A management pay offer of staged rises, conditional on the staff side accepting an independent comparability exercise, was rejected because it did not restore differentials with craftsmen (currently 26.18 per cent), nor did it match increases given other health service personnel.

On the question of bonus payments, NALGO claimed that the amounts set out in the October 1978 agreement were not being paid. The point of principle between the two sides regarding bonuses was not resolved by the management's offer to look at individual cases, the union said.

A special meeting of NALGO's National Health committee is to be held on August 17, to be followed by a meeting of the National Advisory committee.

The committee has already recommended that in the event of no solution being offered by the management, a national delegate meeting of works officers should be called to consider further action.

A warning by the General Nursing Council that nurses who go on strike could face disciplinary action is to be referred to the TUC's health services committee.

The executive of the Confederation of Health Service Employees also decided yesterday to seek an urgent meeting with the Registrar of the GNC.

CORSE officials are angry at what they see as a thinly-disguised attempt to dissuade nurses from joining unions. They also disapprove of the GNC's statement while there is a disciplinary hearing arising out of industrial action pending.

# Customs board sees both unions today

BY GARETH GRIFFITHS, LABOUR STAFF

THE TWO Civil Service unions involved in the customs staff work to rule will decide today whether to continue with their action after a meeting with the Customs and Excise Board to discuss staff cuts.

The Society of Civil and Public Servants and the Civil and Public Services Association will meet before their talks with the board. The unions have been co-operating over the work to rule which started last Friday and was originally planned to last a fortnight.

Miss Judy McKnight, the SCPS national officer, told the Customs section of the union had postponed making a decision until after talks with the board. The unions want more information about planned cuts.

They had said after a meeting on Wednesday with Sir Geoffrey Howe, Chancellor, that the Government was prepared to scale down proposed cuts in the 28,000 Customs and Excise staff.

A strike by nearly 500 staff at 13 inner London magistracies courts is planned for about a

fortnight's time. The strike involves the CPSA and SCPS follows the collapse of pay talks between the unions and the committee of London magistrates on Wednesday night.

Both unions yesterday confirmed the strike action would be official. Mr. Alistair Graham, deputy general secretary of CPSA, said the courts would quickly grind to a halt. They would be able to continue initially without the back up administrative staff but summonses would not be issued, fines uncollected and referrals to higher courts made more difficult.

The unions are claiming parity with Civil Service pay awards of 20 to 30 per cent. They have been offered 9.4 per cent plus a reference to the Clegg Commission on comparability.

The offer is similar to that offered administrative staff in courts outside London, who belong to the Association of Magistrates' Clerks. The offer would deal with 20 in at 13 inner London magistracies courts and a restructuring of salaries.

# European computer sales 'will reach £2.9bn'

FINANCIAL TIMES REPORTER

SALES of small business computers in Europe will reach £2.9bn by 1988, up from £680m in 1978, according to a report by Frost and Sullivan, the U.S. consultants.

The UK's share of this market will be roughly the same as at present—at 16 per cent, behind France's 19 per cent and West Germany's 26 per cent.

Sales in the UK are expected to grow from £1110 last year to £2300m in 1983 and to £471m in 1988. West German sales for 1988 are forecast at £738m and French at £580m.

The report divided small business computers—defined as machines costing less than £70,000—into three categories: the first ranging from "extended typewriters" to "advanced desk calculators"; the second, single or multi-station disc computers; the

third, larger office systems costing between £35,000 and £70,000.

The first of these categories is forecast to grow from 1978 annual European sales of £145m to 1988 sales of £515m. The second should rise over the same period from £220m to £715m, while the third should rise from £282m to £950m.

The report notes that "somewhat disturbingly, companies dedicated to the small business systems market must either be small enough to pursue a narrow-niche marketing strategy or else sufficiently large to become a multi-national supplier, usually with products in two of the three price categories."

Small Business Computer Market in Europe: Frost and Sullivan, 104-122, Marylebone Lane, London, W1.

# Heseltine's adviser

BY ELAINE WILLIAMS

MR. MICHAEL HESELTINE, Environment Secretary, is to appoint a special adviser from private industry to guide him on housing matters.

Mr. Tom Baron, chairman and managing director of Christian Salresen (Properties) which builds houses under the name of Wellmar is to join Mr. Heseltine's department on October 1. The appointment to run for six months.

Mr. Baron, secretary of the Volume Housebuilders Study Group, formerly owned Wellmar, which was taken over by Christian Salresen.

# Yellow Pages contract is valued at £345m

BY ELAINE WILLIAMS

GENERAL TELEPHONE Directory, a subsidiary of the U.S. General Telephone and Electronics, which last week won the British Yellow Pages advertising contract, estimates the deal to be worth £345m.

Mr. Theodore Brophy, GTE chairman and chief executive, has said that the six year contract for directory advertising is the biggest single contract its subsidiary has received.

GTE will gain about 40 per cent of the present advertising sales in the UK when the con-

tract becomes effective in 1981. This will be a major part of GTE's international operations.

The remaining portion of the Yellow Pages contract is shared between another U.S. company, ITT, and the Thomson Organisation.

ITT's contract will last for nine years and will represent more of the UK advertising sales market than GTE. Thomson, which previously handled the entire Yellow Pages advertising, has only a three-year agreement with the Post Office.

# Ceramics safety call

BY ELAINE WILLIAMS

THE CERAMICS industry needs to make a concerted effort to improve safety, says the Health and Safety Executive in its latest report.

The HSE calls for a "really effective onslaught on those practices and problems which still lead to accidents and ill health."

Many of the 60,000 workers in the industry face health risks from lead and silica dust. The HSE wants the industry to find suitable substitutes. It has been the introduction of control measures which has reduced the health risk from lead and silica—not a limit to their use.

The report is critical of the industry's past record in the field of health and safety. It describes it as doing little more than the legal minimum.

Many pottery companies and suppliers of machinery and materials have not yet understood their new fundamental responsibilities under the 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act, says the HSE.

The report warns that increasing mechanisation in the ceramics industry could lead to a greater number of accidents. It stresses that machinery manufacturers had a legal responsibility to design out hazards.

# TUC backs fight to save Shotton

BY OUR LABOUR EDITOR

THE TUC has pledged to support steelworkers fighting British Steel Corporation plans to run-down the Shotton plant in North Wales.

Mr. Bill Sires, chairman of the TUC steel committee, told a workers' delegation which had travelled to London to lobby union leaders that any attempt by the BSC to close down the works, by diverting orders for example, would be opposed.

He said the steel committee expected to make a decision in October on its response to the plans for Shotton and Corby, the other big threatened plant.

Meanwhile, the TUC would ask the corporation to meet the unions and the Shotton workers. The proposals put forward for

Shotton went far beyond those advanced by the former BSC chairman, Sir Monty Finniston, in 1972.

A shunt-down at Shotton on the scale proposed would put up to 10,000 people out of work. This was much higher than previous estimates.

The steel committee had one of its regular monthly meetings with the corporation yesterday. Plant closures were not discussed, in spite of the delegation's attempt to have the issue raised.

Union meetings at Shotton this week showed that most of the workers wanted to resist closure, rather than accept possibly attractive redundancy terms.

# Takeovers rise slightly to 136 in April-June

BY RAYMOND MAUGHAN

A TOTAL of 136 companies were taken over in the April-June period this year for a total cost of £200m, compared with 124 companies acquired for £240m in the previous three months, according to Trade and Industry, the Government journal.

As in the first quarter, there were no mergers in the second quarter and a substantial rise in spending on independent companies was partly offset by a steep fall in purchases of subsidiaries by £10m to £34m.

The journal confirms a substantial slackening from the takeover spree recorded in the final stages of 1978 when acquisition activity was at its highest since 1973.

There were 137 acquisitions in the fourth quarter of 1978, against a quarterly average of 121 takeovers in 1977.

# Isle of Man Post Office shows profit

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL year of business is reported by the Isle of Man Post Office in its annual report for the year ending March 31. But it warns that before the end of this year, it will have to increase postal rates. They have been unchanged since 1976 and are now the lowest in Europe.

The accounts show a profit of £1,137,990 made up of £961,720 from the philatelic bureau, £7,030 on personal services and £169,240 on investment income. Of the profits, £40,000 has been paid to the Manx Government.

# London weighting up

FINANCIAL TIMES REPORTER

IMPROVEMENTS in London weightings have been negotiated by the National and Local Government Officers' Association for its 110,000 local government workers in the London area.

Back-dated to July 1 this year, London area allowances will be increased as follows: Inner London, up £225 a year to £728; Outer London, up £80 to £398; Inner fringe allowance, up £42 to £237; Outer fringe allowance, up £30 to £159.

The new amounts negotiated through the National Joint Council for Local Authorities, Administrative, Professional, Technical and Clerical Staff, were recommended at a meeting on August 7.

A commitment was set up to review all aspects of London weighting, including boundary anomalies and the payments to staff under 18, in time for next year's negotiations.

# Bank dispute

BY OUR LABOUR STAFF

MEMBERS of the Banking, Insurance and Finance Union are due to begin industrial action on Monday at F C Finance, a subsidiary of the Co-operative Bank, in a pay dispute.

The union said yesterday that the dispute had been provoked by the bank's insistence that the union must accept a non-graded job evaluation scheme for managerial and field staff. The union says "no scheme would prevent it from making proper market comparisons on pay."

Miss Ivy Cameron, union assistant secretary, said yesterday that the bank had been prepared to arbitrate on all salary and related issues but only on its terms.

# Chemists' pay formula agreed

BY OUR LABOUR STAFF

A PAY formula was agreed yesterday between NHS retail chemists' representatives and Dr. Gerard Vaughan, Health Minister.

The Minister told representatives of the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee that the Government was pleased with the offer.

Dr. Vaughan said the formula details of which are yet to be worked out, would go a long way to restore comparability with other health professionals.

Mr. Alan Smith, chief executive of the committee, said that he was pleased with the offer.

# Second Pilkington strike

BY OUR LABOUR STAFF

SHOP STEWARDS and national union officers representing 8,000 process workers at Pilkington, Britain's largest flat glass manufacturer, decided yesterday to impose a further one-day strike on August 21 at the company in a dispute over pay.

The workforce, which is represented by the General and Municipal Workers' Union, struck for 24 hours earlier this week in protest at proposed basic pay rises of about 12 per cent in a package worth 15 per cent overall.

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Miss Ivy Cameron, union assistant secretary, said yesterday that the bank had been prepared to arbitrate on all salary and related issues but only on its terms.

# Tornado 'central' to UK air defence plans

BY MICHAEL DONNE, AEROSPACE CORRESPONDENT

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE is fully committed to the specialist air defence variant of the Tornado multi-role combat aircraft. There is no Government intention of cancelling plans to buy 165 of these aircraft, costing £1.8bn.

This was made clear yesterday at the roll-out at British Aerospace's Warton, Lancs, airfield of the first prototype of the ADV Tornado. Air Marshal Sir John Nicholls Vice-Chief of the Air Staff, denied recent reports in the U.S. that cancellation of the ADV was likely to be discussed soon in Anglo-U.S. talks in Washington.

"The ADV Tornado is central

to our plans for the future air defence of Britain and NATO's western seaboard," said Sir John.

"We made our choice several years ago in 1975, when we evaluated every available type of aircraft. We see no reason to change that choice now."

A total of 809 Tornado aircraft is planned for the three countries involved in the programme. The RAF will be taking 385 (including 165 of the ADV), 324 will go to Western Germany and 100 to Italy, for a total programme cost of about £7.6bn.

Of these aircraft, 644 will be of the basic version, each costing £29m (about £5.5bn in all) while the other 165 will be the

ADV, costing £10.7m each (about £1.8bn in all).

So far, production contracts for 314 of the basic Tornados have been signed by the three governments and production is now well under way in the three countries. The initial production contract for the ADV Tornado is expected to be signed next year, with deliveries of this version of the aircraft for the RAF starting in the 1980s.

The ADV (which will be called F-2 by the RAF when in service) is a bigger version than the basic aircraft. It has a new radar and air-to-air missiles designed to intercept enemy bombers approaching UK and NATO airspace by the back door far over the North At-

lantic. The air defence of the European Western seaboard is allocated by NATO to the RAF.

In recent years a powerful American aviation lobby has been trying to undermine the Tornado programme and get Europe, including the RAF, to buy instead U.S. combat aircraft, such as the McDonnell Douglas F-15.

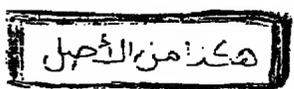
The latest suggestion that such cancellation was a possible topic for discussion was published only this week in the U.S. Journal Aviation Week.

The Vice-Chief of the Air Staff dismissed this suggestion yesterday. "But there is no doubt that between now and the introduction of the ADV

Tornado the UK's air defence capability will be very weak as a result of a long succession of cuts in defence spending.

To correct that weakness, the RAF may be obliged to buy a small quantity of some other type of combat aircraft, such as Phantoms or even F-15s. These options are now being studied, but no decisions have yet been taken and may not be for some time.

Such a purchase may be a topic for discussion when Mr. Geoffrey Pattie, the Minister for the RAF, goes to Washington for defence talks in October. But it was made clear yesterday that he will not be discussing the cancellation of any part of the Tornado programme.



# MANAGEMENT

## John Moore looks at why a British insurance broker is pooling its resources with the world's biggest broker

# How Bowring is preparing for the year 2000

SELDOM HAS a series of discussions between two companies made such a profound impact on an industry or commercial sector as those between Bowring (Insurance) Holdings, part of the Bowring group, and Marsh and McLennan Companies of the U.S., the world's largest insurance broker.

The talks, begun a year ago last June, aimed at linking the resources of the two international insurance broking giants, with both parties pooling their respective profits in a scheme, the details of which have yet to be revealed. Under the arrangement no conventional merger is planned.

When Marsh and Bowring unveiled their plans last September, the transatlantic insurance broking community was stunned by the size of the deal, and what it would mean in money terms once the two groups had formally joined forces.

The two companies would be combining broking commissions of around \$500m on insurance premiums—enough to fuel a major insurance company. More startling is that the volume of the premiums that would flow through the new formal link would represent more than the entire premium income flowing into Lloyd's of London itself.

The deal spawned many imitators, no doubt motivated by a fear of becoming overshadowed by the Bowring-Marsh titan, and by old-fashioned greed, when the possibilities of such a scheme were realised.

Since the announcement by Bowring and Marsh of the outlined plan little has been heard of the practical details. Even now nothing is in a form which can yet be presented to the shareholders of the two groups for their approval and is not likely to be for some months to come.

The only outward and visible sign that anything has been happening at all has been the co-sponsoring by Marsh and McLennan and Bowring of the first transatlantic polar expedition.

Marsh has produced a booklet giving all its subsidiary relationships, equity ambitions and joint ventures, showing their aggregate financial strength, contribution to assets, prosperity, under the general heading "The Marsh and McLennan family". Significantly, C. J. Bowring (Insurance) Holdings, a large domestic market, and the Bowring underwriting



Peter Bowring and Gill Cooke (right) admired for their nerve

company are both included. But behind the scenes a major upheaval is taking place within the Bowring group, one of the most sober of City family companies.

At the centre of this activity is Peter Binney, the 46-year-old chairman and chief executive of C. T. Bowring (Insurance) Holdings, the hub of the group's insurance operations. He is a main Board director of the Bowring group and a member of the 16-strong ruling committee of Lloyd's of London.

He approached Marsh and McLennan in June 1978 and since last September, when agreement was reached, has been involved in the thrashing out of the international legal, tax, and regulatory problems behind the deal.

### Exploratory

Bowring's rationale behind its move towards Marsh dates from some five years earlier. It came to the conclusion then that by the year 2000, there would be about half a dozen major international insurance brokers in the world. If it wanted to be one of them it could not do it alone, because more than 50 per cent of the world's insurance premiums are generated in the U.S. market. What it needed was an association with a U.S. broker which was closely involved with that large domestic market. Although exploratory talks

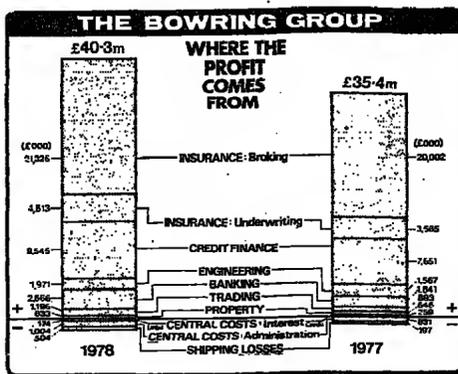
had opened up about that time with Marsh these talks had come to nothing because of the wave of problems that had been created elsewhere in the group by the UK recession.

What triggered Bowring's move in 1978 was Marsh's attempt to get closer to Bland Payne, the UK broker in which Marsh held a 20 per cent stake and which was later to merge with Sedgwick Forbes, another major broker.

The approach to Bland Payne by Marsh did not work out, and was followed by Marsh's bid for the British insurance broker, Wigham Poland, which was aborted by the Lloyd's of London controversial 20 per cent ruling. This prevented an equal say in the management.

It was then Bowring moved in, ostensibly on the offensive but largely for defensive reasons.

Mr. Binney made two proposals. The two groups could join forces through the pooling of profits and the co-ordination of insurance operations with no conventional merger taking place or they could combine through the establishment of a joint company to operate wherever there was a call for Marsh and Bowring to work together. Marsh chose the former plan. But what Mr. Binney and Bowring were looking for in all this was the fulfilment of three



main aims: irrevocability, or no going back on the deal through the use of a cancellation clause in the agreement; equal voice in management; and the opportunity for Bowring to participate in grass roots business in the U.S.

The first two aims were fundamental to the success of the operation. A casual arrangement could not work towards achieving the goal that both groups had set themselves—to be the largest broking concern—to service and attract some of the largest international insurance accounts.

The principle of equal voice in management was an important point to establish. Marsh and McLennan's broking incomes are more than three times the size of Bowring's. Marsh ranks as number one in the international league of publicly quoted brokers, in terms of broking commissions, while Bowring is in seventh place.

It would have been so much easier if we were of equal size but nevertheless, although they were bigger than we were, they were prepared to give us an equal say in the management," said Mr. Binney.

Since then an advisory committee has been set up between the two groups consisting of two representatives from Bowring and two from Marsh and McLennan. It meets once a month, alternating its venues between London and New York, to review problems and deter-

mine how the placing of the insurance business should be re-organised.

Although Bowring's business relationship with Marsh dates back to 1907, the new formal arrangement between the two concerns has placed Bowring under tremendous pressure. New business has been flooding into the group as Marsh has switched large accounts, which it had previously placed with other London insurance brokers, to its new partner.

Bowring has increased its broking staff by 10 per cent this year and in the process has had to adopt an aggressive approach in securing new staff to service the large accounts.

### Buying people

"It is not traditional in Bowring to go out and buy people," says Mr. Binney, "but when you get growth of this magnitude you simply have to; many of them have been handling those accounts now coming to us, when they were placed with other firms."

Group expenses are climbing while the new business is being absorbed and there is not likely to be any appreciable benefit of the jump in business volumes until next year.

Controlling group operations at the centre of the 175 year-old Bowring empire, whose range of activities cover merchant banking, credit finance, shipping, insurance, plant hire,

retail shops and other trading interests, is Gill Cooke, managing director since 1976 and the group chairman, Peter Bowring.

Mr. Cooke, a chartered accountant and a former managing director of the Bowmaker credit finance activities, stresses that each operating subsidiary has a large degree of autonomy. It is only in the areas of resources, acquisitions or merger policies, large items of capital expenditure, that the central management becomes deeply involved in the affairs of the subsidiary.

Although the two top executives have no background in the group's main activity—insurance—they argue that they have a degree of objectivity, and a greater width of general business experience, that perhaps the insurance specialists do not possess.

Mr. Cooke joined Bowring when the group took over Bowmaker, the credit finance group, in 1969 after a tussle with First National Finance Corporation.

The acquisition was part of an ambitious Bowring plan to create a financial services group which would allow a cross-fertilisation of business between the group's various interests. Insurance broking clients could avail themselves of the facilities offered by Bowmaker, and later by Friedlander's bank, which was acquired in a £25m agreed bid in 1971.

The cross-fertilisation concept proved a difficult plan to implement. The two major acquisitions were followed by the recession of 1973 and 1974. Singer and Friedlander's profits slumped as had debts piled up, and borrowing demand "collapsed". Bowmaker moved into a loss as interest rates climbed and had to seek help from the clearing bank "lifeboat". But since then recovery in these activities has been achieved.

The insurance community admired the nerve Bowring displayed in the past year in playing the American deal. Although there were many insurance professionals who argued that a unit of merger of the size of Marsh and Bowring was inappropriate in a service industry.

What Bowring is seeking to prove is that its deal with Marsh can work effectively, and efficiently. For the moment, the defensive advantages of such an arrangement are very apparent.

# A raw deal for the disabled

Work and Disability 1977, by Mary Greaves and Bert Massie. The Disabled Living Foundation, 346 Kensington High Street, London W14, price £2.50.

TODAY, mainly through coverage in the media there is more awareness than ever in Britain of the disabled section of the population. A leading lobbyist for work opportunities for disabled people is Mary Greaves OBE. This severely handicapped lady has herself earned university degrees and forged a career in the administrative side of the civil service.

In 1968 she travelled throughout Britain researching her first report on Work and Disability, which gave recommendations for action to further the possibilities for severely handicapped people to have equal opportunities as able bodied people of the same abilities.

Work and Disability 1977, written by Mary Greaves and Bert Massie, also a severely handicapped person who is a sociologist and economist working as an executive at RADAR (Royal Society For Disability and Rehabilitation), is an update of their 1968 book. The new book is in no way inflammatory but it is disturbing, reading between the lines, to note that the recommendations of the earlier report still remain largely unfulfilled.

Businessmen have often been heard to admit that they are not familiar with the disability scene. Reading this book should remedy this. Call it, if you like, "What Everyone Would Like to Know About Work and Disability and Hasn't Dared to Ask".

The term "disabled" covers both mentally and physically handicapped people. It includes those congenitally disabled and those affected by ensuing illness or accident. At present there are about 75,000 registered disabled people in the country compared with 64,000 in 1968, when the original report was published. The total number of disabled employees today is estimated to be about 400,000 compared with 520,000 in 1968. Over 12,500 disabled people are employed in sheltered workshops, of which more than 800 work for Remploy, a non-profit making company established in 1945.

Unfortunately, today, there is still a widespread attitude that disabled people should be grateful for any job.

Training and higher education are vital to the disabled. Untrained able bodied people can compensate with brawn—not so handicapped people. There is an urgent need for a rehabilitation and assessment centre for disabled professionals, the book argues. There are people in this country who have been officially classified as unemployable who are now in fact gainfully and happily employed. To avoid such errors and ensure that disabled people are employed to their full potential, it is essential that competent facilities are provided for regular assessment and re-assessment. Teams of specialists are wanted for this task.

The authors call for wider publicity to be given to those aids and appliances which help disabled people work better, so that all connected with the welfare of disabled staff should know about them. The Disabled Resettlement Officers of the Employment Services Agency are insufficiently informed about what is available, and the supplying of aids is hindered by red tape. It would also be beneficial, says the book, if the Institute of Personnel Management would include handling handicapped staff in their training courses, which they do not do at present.

Government grants for expenditure on aids are available, but more flexibility is needed. If disabled people have an electric wheelchair at home, the authorities are reluctant to give them a second one at work. This means a dilemma of choosing between the facility at work or home. Within the computer industry, there has been some recruitment of disabled people, but far more advantage needs to be taken of the new technology which can be operated by disabled people. It is, moreover, shocking to learn that there are no disabled people employed in the administration of the publicly financed Remploy Company, say the authors.

This painstakingly compiled report covers the field of work and disability in a comprehensive way. The authors pinpoint all the desirable actions that need to be taken, and address them to the business and Government organisations that are in a position to implement them. It is fervently to be hoped that the report, second-time round, will be heard.

Henry Mara

# Technical News

EDITED BY ARTHUR BENNETT AND TED SCHOETERS

## METALWORKING

### Alloyed cutters for the tough jobs

SWISS hardmetal group, St. Gallen S.A. of Nyon, is manufacturing rhenium-alloyed cutting inserts under licence from Inco Europe. This is the second company to announce that it is producing the new class of sintered carbide developed by Inco's Higher Speed Metals, of Sheffield, reports remarkable results with the new formulation.

The carbides, which improve the performance of throw-away and regrindable cutting tools by factors ranging from 50-300 per cent, were developed at Inco's European Research and Development Centre, Birmingham. It was discovered that the inclusion of a small quantity of rhenium (a precious metal of the platinum group) in the steel-cutting grades of sintered carbide considerably enhanced the cutting performance and extended tool life.

However, because it is completely alloyed, consistent rather than a surface layer, the toughening effect of rhenium is not confined to the exterior of the carbide, making it ideal for brazed-on regrindable tools as well as indexed throwaways.

During intensive research in St. Gallen's machining laboratory, rhenium type inserts continued cutting for 50-100 per cent longer than equivalent non-rhenium tips. But under practical conditions the improvements have turned out to be even greater. Face milling of giant cast steel turbine casings in F. E. Lloyd's Wednesbury machine shop showed a 200 per cent improvement over the previous best carbide, while at Culchester Lath the thread whirling of lead screws using chamfered rhenium tips has resulted in 50 per cent greater output and a 60 per cent increase in tool life. At Wilkins and Mitchell, Darlington, where massive flame-cut bolsters were machined, the metal removed by each rhenium type insert increased by 300 per cent and machining time was halved.

Rhenium-containing carbide tips are ideal for the tough jobs which include milling, and interrupted turning, especially at high speeds and substantial rates of metal removal.

One of the advantages of the development—the "regrindability" of rhenium tips—still has to be exploited. The properties of this particular carbide are not skin deep, they are retained even after regrinding.

Inco Europe, Thames House, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP, 01-834 3888.

## ELECTRONICS

### Power supply centres

THOSE MANUFACTURING such equipment as visual display terminals, data printers, copiers and microprocessor based systems can obtain from Weir Electronics tailored switched mode power supply units, with particular cost effectiveness in production runs of more than 1,000.

The design is at its best for applications to multi-output supplies delivering up to 150 watts of total power and the company is able to offer considerable flexibility in the number of output rails and their voltage and combining ratings. For example, combinations of output voltages such as +5, +12, -12, -5 and +24 volts are easily achieved with current ratings of several amperes per channel, provided that the total power is less than 150 watts.

## MATERIALS

### Warm use for waste newsprint

TRADITIONAL free bed-floen for tramps has been layers of newspapers and choice of this material makes good sense to Diversified Insulation Company, 4 Telford Square, Inxton Industrial Estate, Livingston, West Lothian, Scotland, which buys in graded waste paper—mostly borate or treated with dry borate derivatives—and produce a highly effective insulator.

Scientists in the U.S. first looked at newsprint about 40 years ago, to see if fire risk could be overcome with a view to using it for loft insulation where there would be no problem of it getting wet.

Suitable fire-retardant chemicals (borate derivatives) were already available and proved to be most effective when applied to finely shredded paper—an added benefit was that the chemical also made the material repellent to vermin. Resultant product looked like a grey, loose-textured cotton wool, not unlike the stuffings in a jiffy bag.

Responsible manufacturers kept to the borate formulations which are successfully used today and, anxious to safeguard their business reputations, they formed the Cellulose Insulation Manufacturers' Association (CIMA), pressing federal agencies to draw up with them clearly defined manufacturing standards and requirements.

Borate treated fibre came to Britain in 1978 and Diversified Insulation (a UK company backed by the Scottish Development Agency) makes Shelter Shield under licence from America. Its product, has already been used to insulate 30,000 local authority homes in Scotland.

The company believes that cellulose fibre insulation will, over the coming years, make a valuable, cheap and efficient contribution to the nation's energy conservation programme.

Friends of the Earth should also be reassured—the product proves to be an ideal solution for recycling a material which would otherwise be burned or buried.

## PROCESSING

### Better fly fishing

A PLATED pure silk fly line has just been shown at the Bowood Game Fair by Anglo American Fly Fishing Sports, 8 Wardour Lodge, Rise Road, Sandringdale, Berkshire (0990 20549).

Available in sizes AFTM 4 to 9, the new "Heron" line is said to be extremely supple, giving close loops, perfect turnover and light landing.

Secret advantage of the line is said to be in a new dressing which makes it float high on top of the water, instead of in the film. Pick up is therefore effortless, striking on a long line is swift and positive, and roll casting becomes easy.

As the dressing is completely stable the line requires no special maintenance and can be left on the reels, never becoming tacky.

## SEMINARS

### Finishing without oil

PAINT manufacturer Sonneborn and Rieck, Jaxa Works, Peregrine Road, Hainault, Ilford, Essex (01-500 0251), is to hold a one-day seminar on "Finishing Without Oil" on September 12 close to the factory at the Bald Hind Hotel, Chigwell.

Addressing the seminar will be representatives of the DoE and Furniture Industry Research Association, and papers to be read will include "Water Thinnable Finishes", "High Solids Coatings" and "Powder Coatings" with reference to finishing systems for metal and plastics as well as for wood.

Additional subjects in the field of wood finishing will be "Paper as an Alternative" and "Developments in Adhesives."

## Control of pollution

BECAUSE OF the nature of domestic sewage it is inevitable that offensive odours will arise during its passage through the sewers and during its treatment at the sewage works, and it is becoming more and more usual to take steps to avoid smells in the vicinity of sewage works, particularly when people live nearby.

Treatment of odours from sewage works, by use of ozone,

## DATA PROCESSING

### Compatibles may link

OLIVETTI, THE major international office equipment and data processing supplier, has concluded two agreements with Memorex, plus-compatible peripheral manufacturer competing against IBM in the main.

The announcement stresses close co-operation between the two companies at a time when Olivetti has also been holding talks with another major IBM plus-compatible manufacturer, Amdahl. Furthermore a possible alliance is also being discussed by Amdahl and Memorex, thus presenting the possibility of a powerful IBM alternative line-up.

The agreement between Olivetti and Memorex represents a fundamental opportunity for the exchange of technical knowledge, but was expressed in concrete terms initially in April by the signing of an OEM contract. This stated that Olivetti would assemble and sell the Memorex 1377 video terminal in Italy.

The co-operative arrangement then presented itself in the form of a second agreement which was concluded more recently and outlines plans for Memorex to buy a new high speed thermal printer, which was developed and is now manufactured at Olivetti's factory in Ivrea. The unit can be linked to the Memorex 1377 video terminal and incorporates an interface designed by Memorex at its own research centre in Liege, Belgium. Memorex will then sell the terminal incorporating the Olivetti thermal printer, on a worldwide basis.

There is little doubt that these two contracts are the first steps in what could be extensive technological co-operation between these two companies.

Both Amdahl and Memorex are strongly represented in Italy. Amdahl machines are currently favoured by IRI, the country's major software house, which is also associated with Olivetti. Memorex is extensively used by Datamat, the country's second major software house, a subsidiary of the chemical manufacturer Montedison.

## PROCESSING

### Light sorts limestone

FIRST PHOTOMETRIC sorter to be installed in Finland and the first for a limestone application worldwide, a Model 16 by Ore Sorters (Canada) is being installed for Parak, the largest vertically integrated building materials company in Finland. It has also signed an option for the purchase of two additional machines.

Model 16 is a high-throughput random stream machine, capable of handling up to 180 tonnes per hour in a wide variety of minerals and other materials. Sorting accuracy depends upon several factors, including light reflectance levels between the "accept" and "reject" material, the rock size range and the feed rate. Plant availability is high with only minimal routine maintenance required. The size of materials which can be handled ranges between 10 mm and 180 mm.

A number of Model 16 photometric sorters have been installed worldwide for coarse beneficiation of gold, silver, tungsten and other minerals.

Ore sorters is a wholly owned subsidiary of Rio Tinto-Zinc Corporation. Further details from the latter at 6, St. James' Square, London, SW17 4LD, Tel. (01) 930 2399.

## Samples milk quickly

THE ADDITION of an automatic sampler to the Mini IRMA infra-red milk analyser means that samples can now be dealt with at rates up to 100 per hour during which time the machine, M100 can determine total solids as well as fat, protein and lactose.

Another version, P40, is able to analyse a wide variety of dairy-related products, in addition to milk, at 40 samples per hour. It can, for example, check product specifications for creams, condensed milks, yog-

## Gets at the memory

THE GROWING number of microcomputer designers will be interested in a single package 40 pin device from Intel which will allow micro systems using the company's 8085A and 8088 processors to interface directly to hard discs, fibre optics and other high speed peripheral devices.

This direct memory access (DMA) controller, in two versions working at 3 MHz and 5 MHz, will reduce the time taken for DMA transfers and so reduce the idle time of the central processor during DMA, allowing it to be more efficiently utilised.

Among the facilities offered are block transfer within memory independently of the system microprocessor (particularly useful in word processor

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## COMPONENTS

### Miniature keyboards on offer

ALPHANUMERIC keyboards measuring only 152 x 63mm made by Apex Microsystems and intended for use in field and portable electronic equipment can now be obtained from Walmore Electronics, 11 Betterton Street, London WC2R 9BS (01-836 1228).

Known as the MKB.01 the keyboard has an ASCII character set and is supplied in ASR33 format, although alternative codes and layouts are easily implemented.

Keyboard marketing is part of an expansion being undertaken by Walmore's displays division in display-related products and the units will complement the gas discharge, liquid crystal and cathode ray tube products already handled.

## SUCCESSFUL TAX BOOK

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# THE PROPERTY MARKET BY MICHAEL CASSELL

## Spitalfields comes alive

OFFICE DEVELOPMENT potential at Spitalfields and Aldgate in the City is steadily rising as the volume of available prime space contracts beyond 1974 levels.

There are few better illustrations of what could be in store for the area than the case of numbers 21 to 24 Widgate Street, a row of offices and one shop tucked away opposite Liverpool Street Station.

In April, the properties, which were then owned by Costain, were on the market and attracting bids around the £90,000-£100,000 mark. Eventually, after clients of Richard Saunders pulled out of the bidding at £130,000-£150,000, the properties were sold for about £150,000. Hillier Parker, Baker Harris Saunders and Peter Galan acted for the new owners.

Now comes news that the same properties are back on the market through Baker Harris Saunders at an asking price of £242,000. There is a scheme for the refurbishment of the four properties, which are for sale individually, or in one block.

Costain would not confirm the original sale price this week, but said it found the new price "hard to believe." It added that it did not think contracts on its sale had yet been completed.

The asking price may not, of course, bear any relationship to the eventual selling price, but the example shows that the entire area from just north of the marked-down to the floors and across to Brick Lane has a new future.

Piece by piece, the partially derelict area, which has consistently frightened off most occupiers, developers and funds, is being filled in with a mix of small-scale refurbished and new buildings, as well as major office developments.

Some of the last office development permits granted involved plans for locations such as Brushfield Street, and Artillery Lane, again opposite Liverpool Street, as well as Alle Street on the edge of Whitechapel.

Costain, which has shown more than a passing interest in the area, is about to start work on two refurbishment schemes involving properties it owns in Middlesex Street and Artillery Lane. Eventually these will provide about 16,000 sq. ft. of accommodation.

Asking rents for new space in the area have now touched £9 a sq ft (for the Central and City Holdings/Royal Insurance 20,500 sq ft development in Blossom Street). Modernised accommodation is fetching about £7.50 a sq ft. Tower Hamlets' rates, as opposed to those in the City, are another bonus for occupiers moving east.

The 61-acre site fronting the Minories, formerly occupied by British Rail's Haydon Square goods yard and acquired by Wingate Investments, is being developed by Wimpey Property Holdings as the Wingate Centre. Insurance broker Bain Dawes occupies the first phase, which has been sold to Pearl Assurance for £11m. The second phase will be ready for letting in about a year.

To the east of the Wingate Centre is Gärnders Corner, where Wingate is to carry out a £50m office, shopping and leisure centre scheme. About 200,000 sq ft of office space is to be pre-let to yet another insurance broker, Sedgwick Forbes Bland Payne.

Wingate also expects to start work soon on a 300,000 sq ft office scheme at Goodmans Yard, to the north of Royal Mint Street on the approach to Tower Hamlets. It seems certain that developments such as these will, as with the Natwest Computer Centre, help push back the boundaries for office users. There is still a long way to go before the area dons a mantle of complete acceptability. But who knows, today Whitechapel and Spitalfields, tomorrow Dockland?

Marler Estates has sold Marler House comprising 59,000 sq ft of offices in Bournemouth for £3.5m. The purchaser is thought to be Goodwill Nominees, understood to be acting for Middle East interests. The sale price produces an approximate yield of 4.5 per cent, one of the best achieved in the South of England.

Only in May this year the property group paid £120,000 for the 30 per cent minority leasehold in Marler House. It subsequently paid £2m for the freehold. The group says it will use the profits from the deal to fund future investment and developments.



Pearl Assurance has paid £1.65m for Concourse House, the office block which dominates the frontage to Liverpool's Lime Street railway station. The building, which houses tenants like BUPA, Securicor, Unilever and subsidiaries of Land Securities, has a current income of about £120,000 a year and comprises 51,000 sq. ft. of offices and 19 shops. The block was owned by Lime Street Developments, the consortium of companies—Stock Conversion, United Real Estate, Westmoreland Property and Peachey—which developed it two years ago. They were advised jointly by D. E. & J. Levy and Matthews Goodman & Postlethwaite.

## Legal row over £15m centre plan

SAMUEL PROPERTIES is preparing its legal case against St. Albans City and District Council, the authority which has finally scrapped the group's £15m town centre redevelopment scheme just 16 months after first giving it the go-ahead.

A great deal of water has passed under the bridge since then, and the council's decision to bow to public pressure and kill the Samuel plan ends another phase in the long-running controversy over proposals for the ancient city's Chequer Street site.

The Samuel scheme was to be financed by Standard Life and included 265,000 sq ft of shopping space, but it ran into trouble almost at once. Samuel's intended partner, Bryant Holdings, were precluded by any construction work and, by July, local protests about the plan forced a deferment of the scheme.

Samuel is to sue the council for work already done, damages for misrepresentation, and for breach of agreement. The action could involve as much as £1m. St. Albans is now back to square one in a debate over the central area which has lasted 14 years.

## IN BRIEF

- SavaCentre, the British Home Stores-Sainsbury joint enterprise, will build a £12m shopping complex at Braeknell. The centre will have a floor area of 166,000 sq ft and parking for 735 cars. The developers claim it will be the fifth largest store of its type in the UK.
- Land for the scheme has been leased from Braeknell Development Corporation and the project is still subject to approval from the Department of the Environment. Healey and Baker acted for Braeknell throughout.
- Sun Alliance has bought for more than £700,000 the Dimsdale Developments/Liverpool industrial complex at Eimers End in Kent. The 30,450 sq ft development has been fully let. Debenham, Tewson and Chinnocks acted for the vendors on the funding and Conway Reif advised Sun Alliance.
- Chubb Fire Security has leased the whole of the 15,500 sq ft of office space recently completed at Sheen Lane Centre, London SW14. The company is paying a rental close to the asking price of £7.50 a sq ft for the space, resulting from a Cruden Developments/Scottish Mutual Life Assurance scheme. Jones Lang Wootton and Weatherall Green and Smith acted for the owners and Folhard and Hayward represented Chubb.
- Haslemere Estates has let the final four units on its Pig Lane, Bishops Startford, industrial estate. Booker Belmont, a cash-and-carry wholesaling subsidiary of Booker McConnell, has agreed a rent in excess of £40,000 for 24,000 sq ft of the 74,000 sq ft scheme and average rentals of £1.85 a sq ft have been paid by nine other tenants. Joint letting agents were Derek Wade and Waters of Harlow.
- In a sale and lease back deal, Greenfield Leisure has raised around £700,000 from the sale of the freehold of the Co-operative Wholesale Society department store, King Street, Kilmarnock, to Abbey Property, which was represented by Conrad Rithlat.
- General Accident is understood to have sold 7,000 sq ft of modern offices in High Road, Whiston, London N20 to the V. A. T. Watkins construction group. The price is thought to have approached £600,000. Watkins is to use the offices as its new headquarters. Taylor Rose acted for General Accident and James Neilson for Watkins.
- National Mutual Life Association, of Australasia, has acquired a long lease on a new 23,500 sq ft retail warehouse on the Loreny Industrial estate, Kilmarnock. National Mutual paid Styles and Wood more than £300,000 for the lease and the initial rent is in excess of £32,000 a year.
- Timber group Magnet and Sawlows is understood to have paid around £280,000 for a former factory in Bute Road, Croydon. The group has planning permission to use the 17,000 sq ft former factory for the storage and sale of timber products.

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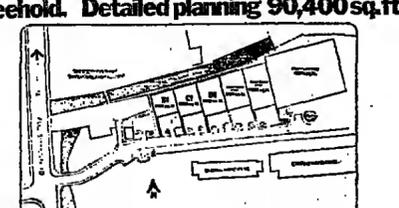
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# How to survive the recession

BY PETER RIDDELL

THE PROPHETS of gloom and doom are banking a time at present. Whichever half-dozen bankers, economists and politicians are gathered together all they can talk about is the coming recession, the tight profits and liquidity squeeze, the consequent inevitable bankruptcies and the unstoppable decay of manufacturing industry—and all by 1984. Far be it from me to spoil the fun (or rather the self-imposed gloom) but the next 18 months may not be quite as horrific as these warnings imply.

For a start, there are few signs yet of a recession in the UK, in spite of all the fears about the future expressed in last week's CBI quarterly survey. Business activity is quite strong at present; orders and deliveries have picked up sharply since the winter and capacity utilisation is at its highest level for over five years.

Industry's demand for bank loans also remains high and the labour market is still tight, especially in south-eastern England. Moreover, such leading indicators as the level of job advertising show no signs of falling off. Consumer spending could turn out to be flat in the next few months by comparison with the buoyant trade of the early summer, but the autumn tax rebates and the big uprating of social security benefits in November could boost sales before Christmas.

## Nasty squeeze

All this may just delay the onset of the recession. The combination of a tight monetary squeeze, a high exchange rate and the slow growth of world trade should ensure quite a marked downturn in activity by the first half of next year. This could mean quite a nasty squeeze for many companies especially those exporting low margin goods which are sensitive to the exchange rate and whose products are vulnerable to competition in the home market from imports.

But manufacturing industry employs less than a third of the total workforce and its problems do not mean that everyone will suffer. Admittedly, the public sector squeeze may ensure that there will not be so large a pool

# Glory without power

BY BRIAN GROOM



THE CITY of Lichfield, in Staffordshire, is proud of its long, predominantly ecclesiastical history and of its celebrated three-spired cathedral, "the mother of the Midlands". No one would dispute the grandeur of either.

What is in dispute is the status of modern Lichfield, which, since 1974, has had no local council of its own—an embarrassment and an annoyance to a 25,000-strong city community which has drifted back to 1953 and county status to 1953.

Lichfield District Council, into which many of the powers of the old city council were subsumed in the reorganisation of local government, has to cater for a much wider area, of 88,000 inhabitants. In all fairness, however, it has not been neglectful of the most critical problem facing the city: how to preserve its ancient character while creating work for its people.

Lichfield needs, like the giant West Midlands conurbation to which it is perilously close, to attract industry. The area's unemployment rate is 9.8 per cent, compared with Birmingham's 6.7 per cent and Wolverhampton's 6.4 per cent.

The city is close to the northern limit of the green belt which surrounds the conurbation, and which is an essential

notably engineering and construction. "The green belt does not inhibit economic development," says Mr. Farrow. A new 42-acre industrial estate is being built by a private consortium, and among the applicants for a place on it is a large multinational seeking room for an office development.

Lichfield's success has been achieved mostly with small companies, but the larger combines have not been totally absent. Royal Ordnance's control equipment company is part of IML, while Bond Brook, a metal components manufacturer on the nearby Treat Valley road, belongs to GKN.

Lichfield enjoys several advantages. The migration of a number of people from the Black Country to the cathedral city has led to a high incidence of skilled labour.

Further, it is on the main London to Manchester railway line and is, by road, only 20 minutes from Birmingham's spaghetti junction.

Lichfield also has the safety valve of proximity to Birmingham and Wolverhampton. It is able to accommodate a number of inhabitants for whom it does not need to provide jobs.

Mr. Farrow, enabled it to achieve a better balance than many green belt communities.



Lichfield: preserving the old yet managing to keep abreast of the times

The city is not ungrateful for this, but is unhappy because, while achieving distinction in industrial development, it has suffered the indignity of losing what administrative autonomy it previously had. Lichfield has always been able to take a joke known as the "city of the three Ps"—pubs, parsons and prostitutes—from the days when it was the original home of the Staffordshire Regiment. But many feel that the political situation is beyond a joke.

The old city council had wide-ranging powers. Now the charter trustees, the 15 councillors from the city who sit on the 56-member district council—have no power to levy a rate, to employ staff directly, or to own property. The city's lovely old Guildhall belongs to the district.

Mr. Bob Blewitt, a Lichfield

district councillor, is chairman of the Association of Charter Trustees, a body representing many towns which were not only deprived of their old councils in 1974, but were denied the successor parishes councils granted to surrounding village communities. He is deeply unhappy about the fate of Lichfield. "We have rates levied directly, in addition to the district rate, for duties supposedly carried out within this city. We should have our own elected council to take charge of it rather than have it disappear into the coffers of the district," he says.

Consultation on planning matters, which the surrounding parish councils have as a right, is granted to Lichfield only as a concession.

But Lichfield, along with other charter trustee towns, is launching an attempt to salvage some of its pride. The guide-

lines of the 1974 local government reorganisation prevented many towns with more than 20,000 inhabitants, or which made up more than one-fifth the population of their districts from being given a success parish or town council. The Boundary Commission's parish review, that restricts has been altered and Lichfield and many other towns are aping for their own councils.

But even if they are successful, things would never be the same. Parish council powers far from mighty for a place which, between 788 and the seat of an archbishop stretching from the Thames the flumber, and which has been the seat of a bishopric, after a period shortly after 1 Norman Conquest, since 6 One wonders what Dr. John Lichfield's most famous would have made of it.

# Wragg challenge at two meetings

VETERAN trainer Harry Wragg is seldom represented at two meetings in a day, and it could be worth noting that Pat Eddery rides for him at Newmarket this afternoon and again at Lingfield in the evening.

Annabella, who runs in Newmarket's opening juvenile event, the Isleham Maiden

## RACING

BY DOMINIC WIGAN

Stakes, has made just one appearance to date. Three weeks ago at Newbury the chestnut filly by Heston out of the brilliantly speedy Sovereign could make no impression in the Chatter Hill Maiden Stakes.

Her backward appearance was reflected in the market, her odds drifted from an opening shop of 3-1 to 7-1 and she is well thought of, and will strip far fitter here.

A half-sister to the Irish

Sweeps Derby runner-up, Lucky Sovereign, and that smart performer, Flashy, Annabella would well figure in the finish

Whatever their wate with Annabella, Wragg and Eddery look set for a winner of Khaki Kate has probably improved sufficiently since her last race to lift the evening meeting's Candlelight Stakes. Runner-up at four lengths to the extremely useful Rowlandson in York's one-and-a-half-mile Fountains Maiden Stakes on July 14, Khaki Kate will appreciate the easier underfoot conditions than she faced on the Knavesmire.

Half-an-hour after the Candlelight Stakes Rankin looks sure to land the Nightwatch Stakes. Guy Harwood's roan son of Owen Dudley is another improving sort, and seems to have scared away most of the opposition.

Of Tomnodon, 6-20 The Jetsons, 6-20 Lucan, 10-30 Clapperboard North West, 11-00 The Friday Film "Nevegas Smith."

10-30 am Allright Now, 11-00 Beginners Please, 11-25 The Paper Lads, 11-50 The Whoops, 1-20 pm Report Headlines, 1-25 Report News Headlines, 2-00 Afternoon Film, 2-15 News, 2-30 Sports, 2-45 News, 2-55 News, 3-00 News, 3-15 News, 3-30 News, 3-45 News, 3-55 News, 4-00 News, 4-15 News, 4-30 News, 4-45 News, 4-55 News, 5-00 News, 5-15 News, 5-30 News, 5-45 News, 5-55 News, 6-00 News, 6-15 News, 6-30 News, 6-45 News, 6-55 News, 7-00 News, 7-15 News, 7-30 News, 7-45 News, 7-55 News, 8-00 News, 8-15 News, 8-30 News, 8-45 News, 8-55 News, 9-00 News, 9-15 News, 9-30 News, 9-45 News, 9-55 News, 10-00 News, 10-15 News, 10-30 News, 10-45 News, 10-55 News, 11-00 News, 11-15 News, 11-30 News, 11-45 News, 11-55 News, 12-00 News, 12-15 News, 12-30 News, 12-45 News, 12-55 News, 1-00 News, 1-15 News, 1-30 News, 1-45 News, 1-55 News, 2-00 News, 2-15 News, 2-30 News, 2-45 News, 2-55 News, 3-00 News, 3-15 News, 3-30 News, 3-45 News, 3-55 News, 4-00 News, 4-15 News, 4-30 News, 4-45 News, 4-55 News, 5-00 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THE ARTS

Covent Garden

La Fille mal gardée

by CLEMENT CRISP

A good ballet brings rewards to dancers as well as to audiences...

With Peter Schaufuss the role of Alain acquires a novel but entirely valid quality...

Leading the performance, Jean Kain and Frank Augustyn brought endearing joy and sweetness of feeling...

The company reading is sound; it lacks something in subtlety—and the performance was one in which, if a property could misbehave...



Jain Mitchell and Michael Carter

Leonard Burt

ICA Theatre

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

by MICHAEL COVENEY

The full title of Andy Smith's antilingually meaningless musical is The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde...

The other actor, Michael Carter, like Mr. Mitchell, is competent but curiously lacking in personality...

The gift of Professor and Mrs. J. Hull Grundy consists of over 500 items, all but six of which are Japanese...

Hull Grundy gift on display

The British Museum has announced that the Hull Grundy gift of Japanese miniature lacquer arts is now on permanent display...

The gift of Professor and Mrs. J. Hull Grundy consists of over 500 items, all but six of which are Japanese...

Elizabeth Hall

Mozart by DAVID MURRAY

Nothing went better in Wednesday's South Bank Summer Music than Mozart's little Masonic Funeral Music...

E-flat Concerto, K. 482 (not the one originally advertised) from a 19th-century manuscript...

Cinema

A touch of clairvoyance

by NIGEL ANDREWS

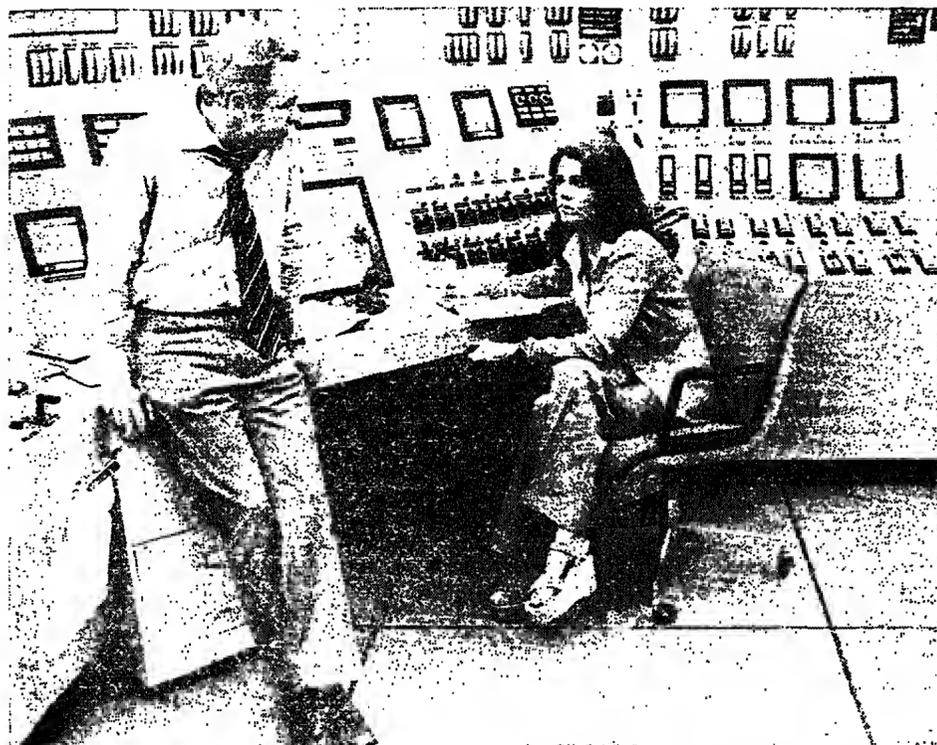
The China Syndrome (A), Leicester Square Theatre Edinburgh Film Festival Rankin Movie, ICA Paul Rotha, National Film Theatre

There is nothing like a dose of up-to-the-minute newswortiness to rejuvenate a dying movie genre...

lethal dose of radiation into the air. How Fonda and Douglas prize a confirmation of the truth from the at-first-guarded Lemmoor...

Jane Fonda, making magic with minimal means as she did in Kluge, turns her sleuth-reporter role into a serio-comic tour de force...

The 33rd Edinburgh Film Festival is about to open, with as promising a line of new movies as it has boasted in recent memory...



Jack Lemmon and Jane Fonda in 'The China Syndrome'

hearingly strong. Ridley Scott's Sci-Fi thriller Alien, British Isles seems to be the theme...

The ICA is currently presenting a season called 'Britannia Waves The Rules: Empire And Resistance'...

religions tensions within the film a choppy, fragmented look that is obviously supposed to say Hoorary-is-Cinema-Verité...

Paul Rotha, that eminence grise of British documentarists, is occupying the screen on the other side of the Thames...

Albert Hall/Radio 3

Zimmermann Oboe Concerto

by MAX LOPPERS

Bernad Alois Zimmermann's Oboe Concerto dates from 1952; in style it seems to stand apart from the later and more celebrated Zimmermann compositions...

the heightened emotional colouring was the particular contribution of the soloist. Hard to imagine a more poetic player of Zimmermann; Holliger's tone, so peculiarly his own in its blends of bite, plangency, and dramatic vigour...

Venturing a possibly rash generalisation after my own introduction to the work in Wednesday's Prom performance (Hainz Holliger and the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Michael Gielen)...

There is something very attractive about the crispness of the first movement, serene in style, its Stravinskian neoclassicism translated into a more complicated harmonic idiom...

EMI launches Harveys series

EMI Records (UK) has signed a contract with Harveys of Bristol to sponsor recordings, under the title 'Harveys of Bristol English Series'...

It is conceivable, though, that

BRAZIL The outlook for the 1980's

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Friday August 10 1979

Three years of M. Barre

IN THE late summer of 1976 M. Raymond Barre, newly installed as French Prime Minister, gave himself three years to knock the country's economy into shape. Now that those three years are nearly up, M. Barre's mission is still far from complete. Inflation is at worrying levels, the trade balance is moving into deficit and the Government is making every attempt to batten down the hatches as the waves generated by the latest round of oil price increases threaten to sweep over the decks.

Oil price It would be wrong to conclude that M. Barre has failed. He cannot be blamed for not anticipating the oil price increases that have thrown out some of his original calculations. And in comparison with a number of other countries, France has so far not fared too badly. The franc has held up well in the European Monetary System and, heretofore surprisingly, outperformed the dollar. Until recently the balance of payments has looked healthy, and in January this year industrial production reached the highest level since before the 1974 recession.

But since then the outlook has deteriorated. After a series of downward revisions in expectations, economic growth this year is now not thought likely to be more than three per cent at best. The increasingly dismal outlook for the second half of the year was a major factor behind this week's decision to stimulate the housing and public works sectors. At the same time, the Government is continuing to urge industry to step up its investments to prepare for the harsh competitive climate of the 1980s. Investment has remained slack despite two packages designed to boost so far this year—largely because of the generally depressed international economic outlook. The recent rapid rise in interest rates will not help to reverse the trend.

Protecting franc The rise in interest rates has come about at least partly in order to protect the franc as the review of the working of the European Monetary System this autumn comes closer. If the franc has done reasonably

After the executions

The widening ripples from Iraq's troubled waters

BY PATRICK COCKBURN

LAST MONTH'S discovery of a high level of conspiracy in Iraq followed by 21 executions on Wednesday, raises the spectre of instability in the world's third largest oil exporter. It also dealt a hard blow to the common front of conservative and radical Arab states opposing President Sadat's peace agreement with Israel. In many ways it is the most important internal political change in the Middle East since the Iranian revolution.

Up to the beginning of this year the economic and potential political power of Iraq was seldom recognised in the West. Since the fall of the monarchy in 1958, successive rulers in Baghdad have been largely absorbed by the complex and sanguinary business of staying in power.

Yet Iraq, with a population of 12m, is the most heavily populated Arab state east of Egypt, and it is unique in the region in combining a relatively large population with very substantial oil revenues.

The size of Iraq's military forces emphasises the point. At the end of last year it had 212,000 men under arms, heavily equipped by the Soviet Union. This compares with a mere 58,500 men in the Saudi Arabian army. Had Baghdad's detente with Syria solidified into close military co-operation the two countries would together be fielding combined armies of almost half a million men and over 4,000 tanks. The military influence of Baghdad is all the more potent given the partial disintegration of the Iranian army. This makes the Iraqis the most powerful military force in the Gulf. Inevitably Saudi Arabia can see some advantages in co-operation with its northern neighbour against whatever threat emerges in Iran, particularly since the departure of the Shah into exile created doubts in Riyadh about the value of American guarantees.

Growing oil revenues

This military strength is backed by growing oil revenues. This year they should total over \$15bn. Before the oil shortage sparked off by the Iranian revolution, Iraq's production was running at 2.6m barrels a day. Since then it has increased to 3.3m m/d, and possibly higher. Capacity is about 4m barrels a day. Reserves are more difficult to assess. Prolonged disputes with the western oil consortium, the Iraq Petroleum Company, (nationalised in 1972) during the 1960s limited exploration but the Iraqi Oil Ministry has claimed that they total a potential 95bn barrels. This makes them the highest in the region after Saudi Arabia.



Saddam Hussein—effective ruler of Iraq since the early 1970s but now under pressure since last month's attempted coup and this week's executions.



the minority Alawi sect) is in part an attempt to mask the deep sectarian divisions in both countries.

In the past Saddam Hussein, an extremely skilful politician, has been able to hold a tight grip on the party by successive purges. His normal technique is to isolate his enemies, be they Kurds, Shia or Communists, and then to crush them. There are now signs that these forces are combining against him. They are encouraged by the revolutionary climate in the area following the fall of the Shah. But the key to their success will be gaining support within the ruling party and the army. This is the reason for the Government's savage reaction against last month's conspiracy.

Comparisons misleading

The sudden collapse of the Shah's apparently monolithic regime last year has led to almost any sign of disaffection in the Middle East being seen as a precursor to revolution. No diplomat or journalist wishes to be caught twice on the job, hence misleading comparisons between Saudi Arabia and Iran. But it is in Iraq, with its large Shia population, and tradition of violent political change, that the influence of Khomeini's success is likely to be greatest. This threat to the stability of the Baathist government should not be exaggerated. But its position is now weaker than at any time over the past five years.

If it does come under attack there must be some doubts about the position of Iraq as a stable alternative to Iran as a source of oil supplies. Such a development would be particularly worrying to countries like France, Italy and Brazil which have looked to Iraq as a major source of crude imports.

It also puts some question marks over the future of Iraq as a long-term market for exporters. Difficult though it is to do business in Baghdad, many exporters see it as second only to Saudi Arabia in long-term potential. Unlike the thinly populated city states of the Gulf, it has an ever-growing capacity to absorb investment. Unlike Iran, the government has so far generally avoided large prestige projects likely to be axed by any succeeding regime.

The country is still a long way from revolution, and Saddam Hussein is certain to liquidate any sign of dissent. Before Iran this might have been enough. But the attempted coup shows that ruling party and the army are not themselves united. The monolithic image created by the government during the past five years has been broken.

year Iraq provided strong diplomatic backing and a \$300m loan.

Friendly noises were also made towards West European countries. A year-long trade boycott of Britain was ended when Lord Carrington, the Foreign Secretary, visited Baghdad in early July.

Recognising the new position of Iraq as a crucial linchpin of Middle East politics, a succession of European foreign ministers trooped through Baghdad airport. France, which had always invested diplomatic time and effort in the country, reached an agreement to take 30m tons of Iraqi crude in 1980. After the fall of the Shah the country began to look like an island of stability.

Failing health

Ironically, so the government now claims, many of the leaders who greeted the visiting foreign dignitaries were already plotting its overthrow. On July 12 the Secretary General of the Revolution Command Council (RCC) was stripped of all posts. Three days later President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr resigned and was succeeded by Saddam Hussein. The latter, though nominally only vice-chairman of the RCC, has been the effective ruler of Iraq since the early 1970s. Two weeks after his takeover as President five leading members of the government and at least 250 party members and officers were arrested or executed. President al-Bakr's resignation had become inevitable due to his failing health, but may have been accelerated by the need to deal decisively with the plotters.

In spite of much speculation the exact form of the conspiracy remains unclear. The Baath party has always been

obsessively secretive. Within a week diplomats were offering observers a choice between five different conspiracy theories. The only one which attracted little support was Baghdad's own explanation that Israel and the U.S. were behind the plot.

The motives of the five members of the Revolution Command Council who opposed Saddam Hussein were threefold: opposition to the dominance of his family in top ranks of the Iraqi government, desire for unity with Syria and opposition to the vigorous suppression of dissidents from Iraq's majority Shia sect.

When President Assad of Syria visited Baghdad in June to discuss uniting government and party in both countries he was faced with unacceptable conditions by Saddam Hussein. This angered the latter's colleagues who took the Baath's declared pan-Arab philosophy more seriously. They are particularly strong in the army and they seem to have been supported by former President Bakr. Inevitably the failure of the unity talks weakened the alliance between the two countries.

The attempted coup may well destroy it. Baghdad's thinking is that if Syria was not actively involved in the conspiracy, the conspirators wanted closer unity with Damascus. Since the common Arab front against Egypt was largely based on the Syrian-Iraqi axis, this now looks extremely fragile. Saudi Arabia and the conservative Arab states will not modify their deeply felt hostility to the Israeli-Egyptian treaty overnight, but in the long term they may well modify their intransigence.

Initial assumptions that the coup was directly linked to the revolution in Iran are not wholly convincing. Of the senior party officials arrested only the secretary general of

Animosity factor

A more convincing explanation of the coup bid is animosity against the family of Saddam Hussein. Since the coup of 1968, which brought the Baath to power, control has been concentrated in the hands of leaders from Tikrit, a town north of Baghdad. This is reinforced by family links: Saddam Hussein and Bakr are cousins. Saddam's brother, Barzan is believed to have been promoted head of intelligence in July, while his first cousin has so far generally avoided large prestige projects likely to be axed by any succeeding regime.

The country is still a long way from revolution, and Saddam Hussein is certain to liquidate any sign of dissent. Before Iran this might have been enough. But the attempted coup shows that ruling party and the army are not themselves united. The monolithic image created by the government during the past five years has been broken.

Off the rails yet again

THE HALF-YEAR figures for British Rail are not on the face of it too frightening. A loss of £10m on 24 weeks of operations represents only about 1 per cent of turnover, so that it might seem that quite a marginal price adjustment would restore viability. The fact is that British Rail is talking in terms of a fare increase of 20 per cent, because it well knows that the figures are a great deal worse than they look. From the railway point of view, new fares must provide for still sharply rising costs, and for the service of desperately needed new capital for re-equipment.

Futile From the national point of view the figures are, of course, much worse again. Unfortunately the UK habit of mixing revenue subsidies and capital write-offs makes it very hard to estimate just how much the service is costing us. All the same, the fact that governments of every colour think it worthwhile to support rail services—and there is now talk of an EEC subsidy—suggests that it is futile to suppose that railway problems can ever be solved by applying a simple commercial rule-of-thumb.

So far as the most expensive services are concerned—the commuter services with their intense peak problems—there is no realistic alternative to railways. Our major cities grew up around railway networks which were profitable in a period of low interest rates and large income differentials between the average passenger and the average railway workers. Social change and inflation have turned profits to losses, but the physical necessity remains, rural services fill a social need. The only questions are how far the commuters themselves should pay for this service (and perhaps whether they should pay out of taxed income), and how far the remaining burden should fall on national finances, local finances, or on more profitable rail services.

When it comes to railway investment, other questions arise. Railways are generally energy-efficient when fully loaded; railway equipment has a long working life (the rolling stock

now needing replacement is 20 to 25 years old) so that inflation and high interest rates throw a disproportionate burden on present rather than future operations.

All this suggests that the present Government, like its predecessors, must be prepared to commit a basic sum to railway support before it can ask the operating Board to show a "surplus"—the block-grant approach which has proved the best compromise between subsidy and efficiency.

A distinction It might then be argued that the Board should be allowed the fullest commercial freedom; but there is another distinction to be drawn. It is reasonable that the Government should seek to control investment in the loss-making services, which may actually lead to larger losses.

What is not reasonable is that Whitehall should rob the system of normal commercial freedom in financing growth in its profitable services. For example, the freight service is actually short of some 200 locomotives, and hampered by worn-out rolling stock. Yet British Rail has been forbidden to lease the necessary equipment, as other enterprises might, though large funds are available for this purpose, and permission should be needed even for investment financed by users' pools.

Duties to face However, if the Board is to claim greater commercial freedom, as it should, it also has certain duties to face. It can hardly claim this freedom as long as it does not allow the private sector access to its own equipment orders; the monopoly of British Rail Engineering is inappropriate, and almost certainly costly. It cannot expect users to provide equipment unless it can be operated to full capacity at week-ends, for example. In short, British Rail cannot operate commercially, even after subsidy, unless its labour force is prepared to work commercially, facing competition, providing service when users want it, and contributing to efficiency. This remains the toughest problem for the Board.

MEN AND MATTERS

GEC's year of the salesman

Somewhere in the ranks of the General Electric Company (GEC) lurks a happy man who made more from the company over the past financial year than his chairman and his managing director put together.

Reading the company's annual report, published yesterday, with my customary keen interest, I saw the column "employees' emoluments exceeding £10,000." There are some 575 of them (from a workforce of 184,000), and they range between £10,000 and £37,500.

Then in solitary splendour, comes a figure in the £102,300-£205,000 range. By comparison, the chairman, Lord Nelson of Stafford, gets a mere £33,000 for his pains, while the highest paid director—can it be other than Sir Arnold Weinstock?—receives £90,000. So I asked the country's biggest private employer who this well-paid individual is.

GEC would give no name. A spokesman would only say that it was a senior salesman in the company's computer division—one which has done well in recent years.

It seems this man has been selling GEC computers at a furious rate for the past two years, but that payments on the computers have been made in the past financial year, bringing him his bonuses in a lump.

"This is a freakish occurrence," said the spokesman. "We don't expect it to happen again."

Name dropper The most ambitious accounting merger ever attempted already seems to be finding its difficulties, even though the agreement to form the new group was announced only two weeks ago.

The proposed new firm will be the first of the international giants not to have an exclusively Anglo-Saxon base. Among the European founder-members are



"They're lost without TV commercials"

the biggest firms in France, Denmark and the Netherlands and the No. 2 in West Germany. The UK firm is Thomson McLintock and other members come from the U.S., Switzerland, Canada and Australia.

Unfortunately the group finds itself unable to agree on a name. Adoption of one of the existing titles has been ruled out, since this would imply that one firm was taking over the others. However, since the announcement was made, the main decision taken by the founding firms has been to reject a proposed neutral title. This lack of agreement bodes ill, say accountants happily, for the future of the merger.

In Chelsea he received 800 votes, but the other 31 candidates polled less well, leaving the party with an unimpressive 0.66 per cent share of the overall London vote. After that his enthusiasm for politics waned. Stutchbury told me yesterday he had firm views on teaching business management. Two weeks of the course will be devoted to lectures from successful businessmen, with time available for rigorous

cross-examination of the problems new projects were likely to face.

Handlebar hero

A call for help has arrived from Carl A. Minor, a retired banker in Missouri. Later this month, Minor will be coming to Britain to search for clues about an ancestor named Thomas Stevens, who won passing fame in the 1880s by riding around the world on a penny-farthing bicycle.

At this time of renewed faith in pedal power, Stevens should be a cult hero. But little is now known about him. "I shall be going to Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire, the birthplace of Stevens as well as my maternal grandmother," writes Minor. But he has been completely unable to discover what happened in later life in Stevens, who was a reporter for the New York World at the time of his youthful feat.

In the library of the Royal Geographical Society I found Stevens's two-volume Around the World on a Bicycle, describing his 13,500 miles of bone-shaking across America, Europe and Asia. He seems to have had an many hair-breadth escapes from wild beasts and bandits that he simply may have settled down afterwards to placid obscurity.

Hard headed

A recruitment party conducted by a Bristol company last month was a great success, according to its staff magazine. "It ran from 8 pm until midnight, and during that time two cases of gin and three of whisky were consumed. As a result 11 men have applied to join the company, the first applicant arriving on the morning after the party."

I hope he held his job as well as his liquor. Observer

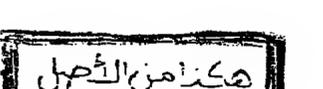


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read the small print first Bouchard Aine Burgundy specialists and shippers of fine wine 65 EBURY STREET, LONDON, SW1. (Line denoting the eldest son of the family)



# Putting the squeeze on foreign students

By MICHAEL DIXON, Education Correspondent

TO ANY Government anxious to curb public expenditure, the £100m spent annually on subsidising overseas students must appear eminently suitable for sacrifice. No precedent has been set by the Conservatives' proposal to phase out the 60 per cent subsidy by charging the full average cost in courses in United Kingdom universities, polytechnics and further education colleges to the bulk of foreign entrants from the autumn of 1980. A similar step was under examination two years ago by the Labour Government, although it eventually renounced control by price in favour of limiting the influx from abroad by the imposition of quotas.

Nor is a precedent set by the Conservatives' decision that this autumn—a year in advance of the proposed gradual removal of the subsidy—there will be a sharp increase in the tuition fees of overseas students already enrolled in the State institutions of post-school education. It was also Labour which broke the tradition of charging only nominal sums.

## Raised fees

Worried by the foreign contingent's growth from 31,000 to approaching 80,000 over the decade to 1977-78, the previous Government steeply raised the fees paid by the 55,000 or more not added through the Overseas Development Ministry or educational institutions' hardship funds. The average increase imposed for 1977-78 was 60 per cent. By comparison, the increase this autumn will be 33 per cent.

But, although saving an estimated £6m in the current financial year, the raised fees will still leave three-fifths of the average unit cost of the foreigners' higher or further education to be met by UK

taxpayers. So to phase out the subsidy from September, 1980, would require this autumn's charges to be multiplied by two and a half. This would imply at current prices—fees of £3,075 for new postgraduates (now about 22 per cent of overseas total), £2,350 for undergraduates (44 per cent), and £1,200 for post-degree students (34 per cent).

The charging of "full economic costs" can be supported with strong argument by education ministers required by the Cabinet to cut perhaps £200m this year and £400m next from projected annual education budgets of roughly £5.5bn. Mr. Mark Carleton, Secretary for Education and Science, and his political colleagues will doubtless maintain that the subsidising of overseas students entering from 1980 onwards could be continued only by commensurate reductions in educational provision for British youngsters. Privately ministers are already saying that the subsidy is a remnant of Empire—half of the foreign contingent still come from the Commonwealth and UK dependencies—which the country must recognise that it can no longer afford.

Even so, it is certain that when the summer holiday is over the various educational interest groups will react to the full-cost proposal by increasing the concerted opposition which they mounted against the previous measure to contain the influx from abroad, whether by price or by quota.

Any reduction of the subsidy born of Imperialism is automatically condemned on grounds of racial discrimination by the anti-Imperialist National Union of Students. This body is committed to the belief that public spending of any amount can be funded, if not from taxes, then certainly from the overflowing pockets of capitalists. The opposition from adult educational interests is usually less ideological. The supporting arguments, however, are not always in accord with the observable evidence.

Claims that the subsidy is no more than a due from a still relatively wealthy nation in the aspiring youth of poorer countries, is at odds with the hitherto unpublished figures in the accompanying table.

Moreover, of the students who come from countries which are poor, many belong to their nation's richer families.

Even if Labour had won the General Election, steps would have been taken to end the injustice whereby large numbers of British taxpayers are required to finance education for families better off than themselves.

The table chimes somewhat oddly, too, with claims that the subsidy is an investment on the grounds that most of the beneficiaries will return to important positions at home and influence their country in favour of the UK interest. The current attitudes of Iran and Nigeria—

## MAIN SOURCES OF OVERSEAS STUDENTS IN BRITISH STATE POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION

	1977-78		1976-77		% rise (+) or fall (-) over period
	Number of overseas students	% of grand total	Number of overseas students	% of grand total	
Total of top 18	58,904	68.4	56,328	68.0	+ 4.6
Grand total	86,107	100.0	82,974	100.0	+ 3.9
Malaysia*	12,856	14.9	11,958	14.4	+ 7.5
Iran	10,071	11.7	9,202	11.1	+ 9.5
Nigeria*	4,251	4.9	5,574	6.7	-12.1
Hong Kong*	4,585	5.3	4,164	5.0	+10.1
United States	3,424	4.0	3,456	4.2	-0.9
Greece	3,225	3.9	3,281	3.9	-1.3
Sri Lanka*	2,353	2.7	2,656	3.2	-11.4
India*	2,163	2.5	1,796	2.2	+14.1
Singapore*	1,718	2.0	1,618	1.9	+ 6.2
Cyprus*	1,601	1.9	1,625	2.0	- 1.5
Turkey	1,585	1.8	1,461	1.8	+ 8.5
Jordan	1,482	1.7	1,147	1.4	+29.2
Zimbabwe-Rhodesia*	1,446	1.7	1,392	1.7	+ 3.9
Kenya*	1,350	1.6	1,698	2.1	-20.1
India*	1,340	1.6	1,742	2.1	-23.1
Canada*	1,127	1.3	1,077	1.3	+ 4.6
Pakistan	1,127	1.3	1,312	1.6	-14.1
Venezuela	1,076	1.2	1,069	1.3	+ 0.7
Total of top 18	58,904	68.4	56,328	68.0	+ 4.6

\* Commonwealth members and UK dependencies.

part are by no means impoverished.

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consistently two of the largest contributors to the foreign total—suggest that such "favours" could turn out to be expensive.

Another argument for keeping charges low is that, even if the UK gains nothing by encouraging overseas students to come here, it will lose by not doing so. Higher fees would reduce the number of first-class minds from other cultures coming to add a desirable international dimension to British institutions.

The evidence to date, however, is that foreigners generally are eager to come despite the need to pay more. Between 1976-77 and the following year, fees rose on average by 60 per cent. As the table shows, the

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known total of overseas students nevertheless continued the growth of previous years. And of the foreigners who applied, in particular, to enter universities in autumn 1977, only about a quarter were admitted, compared with more than half of the British applicants.

This suggests that, if universities were prepared to admit applicants from abroad as generously as they admit those from Britain, they could preserve their international levelling even if the number of initial applicants from overseas fell by more than half.

So when foreign students' fees are treated as a straightforward issue, the balance of argument seems to be in favour of charging at least the full cost. But in reality the issue is far from straightforward, and for three main reasons.

The first is that nobody knows how many overseas students there really are in the category of people not holding a British passport who came here to study. They are defined officially only as students who are "not normally resident in this country," and the figures in the table represent all those in this category. But the definition is interpreted differently by different local education authorities which are directly responsible for the award of student grants.

Some authorities treat anyone who has been in the UK for at least three years—except for holidays—as "normally resident in this country." So foreign families with detailed knowledge of British local government can, especially if rich enough to afford boarding places at independent schools, arrange for their sons and daughters to become officially

British students, and go on to university, polytechnic or college on that basis.

The Department of Education and Science says that increasing numbers of local authorities are now closing this loophole, as a result of the pressure on public spending. But clearly, if policy on overseas students' fees is to be fair to all foreigners alike, the definition of who is and who is not an overseas student needs to be tighter—and uniform throughout the country.

A second difficulty arises from the fact that foreign students are not distributed evenly across the whole range of studies. They are concentrated heavily in those of the technological kind, not only at degree level, but also in sub-degree "vocational training" in technical colleges.

Such programmes often have a majority of students from abroad so, if higher fees significantly reduced overseas demand, there would be the problem of what to do with the British students.

If the "uneconomical" courses were continued, or if the British students from several sparsely attended courses were sent instead to one regional centre, the unit costs of their training would rise steeply. Simply closing the courses would deprive Britain of much-needed skilled workers.

Moreover, there is almost certainly an investment value in having foreigners on technical courses in this country, because the future managers and technologists are trained on British equipment and are likely to prefer to use it when they return home.

The third problem and undesirable consequence of further fee rises is indicated by the last column of figures in the table. Following the 60 per cent average rise in autumn 1977, most of the 18 countries

sent more students, and the contingents from Cyprus and the United States and its dependencies declined only slightly. But there were marked decreases in the numbers from India, Kenya, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. And these four are the only countries in the table "which, in terms of Gross National Product per head are classified among the world's poorest group of nations.

So it seems that, while relatively wealthy nations may take increased charges in their stride, the impact will find them a forbidding burden. This is, of course, no argument for continuing to subsidise overseas students' fees generally. But it is surely a compelling case for the provision of generously increased funds to help youngsters who, although well qualified for British higher or further education, cannot afford to come here.

If the Government is to charge the "full economic cost," it needs to ensure that the necessary funds are available to assist such deserving cases in their studies. But the allocation of such funds should not be the responsibility of the Department of Education and Science or the local education authorities, which are not equipped to assess whether an overseas applicant is a deserving case or not. The responsibility rightly belongs to the Overseas Development Ministry.

Provided the Government deals with these difficulties, however, it might at last produce a system for coping with foreign students in State further and higher education that is both fair and largely self-financing, instead of the expensive tangle of arrangements which has grown like a bramble bush amid the tangle of the past few years.

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## Letters to the Editor

### Leasing aids business

From Mr. S. Knott  
Sir—I cannot understand the conclusion reached by Mr. J. R. Frank and Mr. S. D. Hodges of the London Business School (August 6).

The benefit of the tax credit appears to be split roughly equally between the lessor and the lessee. This is reflected in the reduction in interest rate charges, where money is leased rather than borrowed, the difference is in excess of 3 per cent.

Toward the end of 1978 there was a considerable increase in interest rates; at the same time there was a decrease in leasing charges, caused by the excess taxable capacity of the clearing banks which reflected a good profit year.

If bank lessors were retaining the whole or most of the advantage of the tax credit this would be reflected in above average profitability for their leasing subsidiaries. The table shows the figures for the main bank leasing subsidiaries for 1977.

For this purpose employed capital does include the capital and reserves of the leasing subsidiaries plus deferred tax. The table shows that not one bank lessor had a return in excess of 10 per cent and that the median figure was 5.9 per cent. Had these assets been employed in short term gilts the average return would have been at least twice.

Not all of the figures for 1978 are yet available but I do not see any change in the underlying trend. The return on

	Employed capital £000	Pre-tax profits £000	Return on capital %
Midland Montagu	114,958	7,246	6.4
Barclays Leasing	85,890	9,611	9.4
Lloyds Leasing	75,190	3,923	2.6
Lombard Nbr. Central (Nat. West)	61,455	3,616	5.9
Royal Bank Leasing	37,104	794	2.1
Williams and Glyn's	16,554	510	3.1
Ibos Leasing (Bank of Scotland)	12,022	689	5.8

assets is about one third of the standard return in the banking sector which means that a considerable portion of the benefit goes to the lessee.

If the Government was to act on the advice of Messrs. Frank and Hodges the damage to the economy would be considerable. Leasing represents the easiest form of medium term finance for medium sized and small businesses who are paying no tax, except on a corporation tax. The withdrawal of this facility would reduce the level of investment, have some effect on unemployment, and damage profitability.

S. H. J. A. Knott,  
Greene and Co.,  
Finsbury House,  
22, Bloomfield Street, EC2.

### Car excise licence

From the National Secretary, United Commercial Travellers Association Section, Association of Scientific Technicians and Managerial Staffs  
Sir—As a matter of professional concern I support the Royal Automobile Club, and others in opposition to the possibility of the £50 car excise licence being replaced by an increase in petrol tax.

On the basis that this has already been mooted it would mean that companies employing sales forces would face an additional cost of at least £200 per vehicle per annum. By no logic is such an arrangement anything other than a penalty. No amount of persuasion would convince us that substitution is the name of the game!

This, if it happens, will hit small companies hardest and could affect jobs in larger companies also, as all companies constantly keep the cost of operating sales forces under review.

Roy Tomlinson,  
Beaton Lane,  
Knutsford, Cheshire.

### Currency futures

From the Economic Adviser, Bunge and Co.  
Sir—The information given by David Lascelles in his article (August 8) about currency futures in the Chicago international money market is fascinating.

There is another point, he omits, which I suggest could become important. When Foreign Exchange markets are optimistic about a particular

## A concrete cuckoo

From Mr. D. Burgess-Wise  
Sir—My apologies to Mr. Turner of British Airports Authority (July 31). I had assumed that in his position he would have been aware of the Battersee report and of the Open University energy department report, both of which totally refute the need for a third London Airport. And, indeed, that he would have read the editorial in Flight International for July 14 which also argues against the need for a third London airport.

Unfortunately, the body that he represents does not seem to know when to give up—its quest for a third London airport site has now celebrated its 25th anniversary, and has always been rejected on both environmental and cost objections. I would hate to estimate the total cost to the nation of this obstinate attempt to plant the BAA's concrete cuckoo in someone else's nest.

Most of the proposed sites have already been rejected by earlier airport commissions, so why have they now been revisited? The sites have not changed, and therefore must be as unsuitable for a gigantic airport now as they ever were.

Perhaps Mr. Turner could also explain why BAA should be above the Green Belt regulations which apply to everyone else. Was not aware that the siting of a pleasure airport was a national emergency.

David Burgess-Wise,  
25, Wofker Avenue,  
Fyfield,  
Oxford, Essex.

## Shopping centre brashness

From Shirley Dupree  
Sir—We read with interest Colin Amery's article on Milton Keynes shopping centre (July 30) and would draw particular attention to his comment that "the cool austerity of the Milton Keynes centre is too uniform and too controlled to have much meaning for the people who are going to use it."

The problem of architects' constant aspirations to create an ideal wonderland is that the rest of us have to live with their creations now. Awareness and appreciation of "good taste" design is very limited and must be seen in the context of reality and natural contrast.

A shopping centre is a meeting place. The signs and messages, sound, smell, people and merchandise are all essential ingredients in creating a "market place" alive with variety and colour. Visiting the market place is a necessary social activity for real people; we must ensure that it is also pleasurable.

Thank goodness for the "brash facades and bideous lettering" that we know and understand—the familiar in an unfamiliar environment.

The primary concern of retailers must be serving the people of today. The mechanics of a permanent structure well detailed and built should never be confused with something alive and real which has responded to current trends and changes. Reliance on an exciting tempo all of its own which will survive despite architects and town planners.

Shirley Dupree,  
Dupree Partnership,  
1, Ives Street, SW3.

## Closure at Portmadoc

From the President, Consumer Products Division, SCM Corporation  
Sir—The article on the closing of SCM's Portmadoc type-writer factory by Mr. Robin Reeves (July 20) is inaccurate. It is unfair to SCM. The article suggests that the rising value

## Today's Events

- GENERAL**  
UK: Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister, and Lord Carrington, Foreign Secretary, present Rhinodan constitutional proposals to the Cabinet.  
Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, and Transport and General Workers' Union meet to discuss inter-union dispute halting work at Humberston area terminal.  
Society of Civil and Public Servants, and Civil and Public Servants Association discuss possible strike over pay by 500 London magistrates court clerks.  
Mersey dockers discuss unofficial strike over pay.  
Trust and International Trade Fair opens, Falmouth (until August 31).  
Overseas: Sir Kenneth Clark, Lord Mayor of London, meets chairman of Federation of Korean Industries in Seoul.  
Ecuadorian civil government due to take office.
- OFFICIAL STATISTICS**  
House renovations—work completed (second quarter).  
Slum clearance (second quarter).  
Housing starts and completions (June).  
Building Societies' receipts and loans (July).  
Final dividends: Rowland Gaunt, Wm. Jackson and Son, Wholesale Fittings Company, Interim dividends: Radiant Metal Finishing Company.  
**COMPANY MEETINGS**  
Dundonian, Euro Crest Hotel.
- Queensferry Road, Edinburgh, 11. Radiant Metal Finishing, 69, Fairfield Road, Row, E. 12.30.  
Scapa, Saxon Inn Hotel, New Tree Drive, Blackburn, 11.30.  
**LUNCHTIME MUSIC**, London  
Band concert, Tower Place, 00m-2.00 pm.  
Pop band, Travelling Vango, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, 12.15 pm.  
Recital by Ivan Andreev (piano) and Christine Creswell (soprano), St. Lawrence Jewry next Gullhall, 1.00 pm.

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UK COMPANY NEWS

Automotive ahead so far but warns on margins

IN THE first half of 1979 Automotive Products, the vehicle and aircraft equipment manufacturer, managed to raise profits by 8.3 per cent to £7.88m, but the directors warn on the second six months.

The profit was achieved in the face of the bad winter and the transport dispute, and compared with the second half of 1978 shows only a 2.1 per cent increase. Turnover at £95m is 9 per cent up on both periods.

INDEX TO COMPANY HIGHLIGHTS table with columns for Company, Page, Col., Company, Page, Col.

Mercantile Investment expansion

Net revenue of Mercantile Investment Trust rose to £1.68m in the half year to July 31, 1979, compared with £1.32m last time.

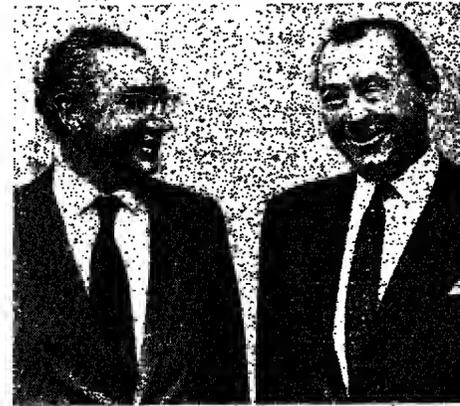
A-American Securities up midway

NET REVENUE of Anglo-American Securities Corporation rose from £1.01m to £1.23m in the six months to July 15, 1979, after tax of £663,319, against £600,471.

GEC in strong position to face next decade

BY JOHN LLOYD

Sir Arnold Weinstock, managing director of General Electric Company said yesterday that whatever lies ahead, the group was "in a far stronger position to withstand setbacks and to take advantage of new opportunities in the 1980s than when we were founded in 1917."



Sir Arnold Weinstock (left), managing director of the General Electric Company with Lord Nelson of Stafford, the chairman.

In his annual statement, Lord Nelson, chairman, says that the advantages expected for GEC from mergers with English Electric and AEE 10 years ago have been fully realised.

He says that group exports from the first to the tenth year multiplied by almost four times, capital expenditure nearly seven times and the tax paid to the Government by eight times.

Thomson Brandt of France.

GE of America exported 16 per cent of its U.S. manufactures.

GEC on the other hand exported 34 per cent of its home manufacture (£751m out of £2.2bn) and so was close to Siemens which exported nearly 40 per cent of its output.

Second half lift for Longton

A SECOND half increase from £483,000 to £530,000 lifted taxable profits of Longton Transport (Holdings) to a record £1.65m for the year ended March 31, 1979, against £1.12m previously, a rise of 47.5 per cent.

At half-way, the directors were confident on improving the full year's figure, despite the lorry drivers' strike at the beginning of 1979.

string growth on the storage and distribution side of the business. Elsewhere, buoyant sales of cars and specialised machinery more than offset difficult trading conditions in the commercial vehicle sector to give an impressive 79 per cent profit rise to £470,000 for the group's smaller vehicles division. Overall, the group is trading in volatile areas, a factor which probably explains the undemanding rating of the shares which at 83p, sell on a p/e of 3.6 (low tax charge) while the yield is nine per cent.

7% Swiss convertible for Leves

Leves, the fabric printing group, is raising a £360,000 convertible ten-year loan at 7 per cent from a Swiss investment bank. The stock is convertible into Leves ordinary shares at a price of 20p.

Mr. Charles Harris, the chairman, told the annual meeting the funds would be used to create a firm asset and profit base.

Mr. Currie denies forecasting £350,000 profit for Belhaven

BY JAMES BARTHOLOMEW

Mr. Gordon Currie, a former chairman at Belhaven Brewery Group, yesterday told his side of the boardroom row which has suddenly erupted.

His version came the day after Mr. Roy Ling, the chairman West a week ago, made serious criticisms of Mr. Currie and just before the rest of the board comes out with its own statement. The climax of the battle — unless Mr. Peter Rowland, the current chairman, can conciliate the parties — may come at a board meeting today.

properties £140,000, profit on redemption of dollar loan £60,000 and an insurance claim of £25,000.

Mr. Currie says that the hedged pre-tax profit was only £50,000. In fact even this figure was not met. The actual result was a pre-tax loss of £58,000. Mr. Currie says that factors contributing to the shortfall were the irrecoverability of the insurance claim and the transformation of the exchange profit into a loss because of the strength of the pound.

terms that it removed him from his position as chairman and managing director.

One of the terms was that Ashpoint should remain outside Belhaven's control for seven years from 1981. The Belhaven board may reveal more details of the conditions soon.

Pitney Bowes passes £1.3m

comment Longton has turned in a creditable set of figures for the year. Admittedly, the previous year's results were depressed by industrial disputes, but even so, the year's profit gain reflects firm all-round growth, including a one-fifth rise from steel stockholding — a result, no doubt of the Davignon plan to curtail low-priced imports. In spite of the lead drivers' strike, the weather, the road transport division's profits jumped by 52 per cent to £610,000, thanks to

comment

comment Taxable profits of Pitney Bowes rose from £1.2m to £1.3m in the first half of 1979, on increased turnover of £12.6m against £9.75m. In the last full year, the surplus reached £2.2m. After tax of £681,000 (£830,000), net profit came through at £653,000, compared with £575,000. The company, which is a subsidiary of Pitney Bowes of Stamford, Connecticut, makes postage meters and mailing and business machines.

Anglo American Gold Investment Company Limited

(Incorporated in the Republic of South Africa)

INTERIM REPORT

The following are the estimated results of Anglo American Gold Investment Company Limited and its subsidiaries for the half-year ending August 31 1979 together with figures for the eight months ended August 31 1978 and the fourteen months ended February 28 1979. Investment income for the six months ending August 31 1979 is comparable with that for the eight months ended August 31 1978. These results should be read in conjunction with the notes below.

Table with columns for Estimated for half-year ending, Eight months, Fourteen months ended. Rows include Investment Income, Interest earned and other income, Deduct: Administration expenses, interest paid, prospecting and mineral rights expenses, Group profit before taxation, South African normal taxation, Group profit after taxation, Preference dividends paid and accrued, Earnings attributable to Ordinary shareholders, Ordinary dividends, Retained profit, Number of ordinary shares in issue, Earnings per share—cents, Dividend per share—cents.

NOTES

- 1. It should be assumed that the results for the first half of the year are necessarily provisional to the results for the financial year ending February 29 1980 since investment income does not accrue evenly during the year and certain costs, particularly those incurred on prospecting and mineral rights, vary materially from time to time.
2. Particulars of the group's listed investments and the net asset value are as follows:
(a) Listed Investments
Market value, Book value, Appreciation.

INTERIM DIVIDEND

Interim dividend No. 63 of 175 cents a share (1978: 100 cents) for the year ending February 29 1980 has been declared payable to shareholders registered in the books of the company at the close of business on August 24 1979 and to persons presenting coupon No. 93 marked "South Africa" detached from share warrants to bearer.

The transfer registers and registers of members will be closed from August 25 to September 7 1979, both days inclusive, and warrants will be posted from Johannesburg and United Kingdom offices of the transfer secretaries on or about October 4 1979. Registered shareholders paid from the United Kingdom will receive the United Kingdom currency equivalent on September 25 1979 of the rand value of their dividends (less appropriate taxes). Any such shareholders may, however, elect to be paid in South African currency, provided that the request is received at the offices of the company's transfer secretaries on or before August 24 1979.

The effective rate of non-resident shareholders' tax is 15 per cent. The dividend is payable subject to conditions which can be inspected at the head and London offices of the company and at the offices of the company's transfer secretaries, Consolidated Share Registrars Limited, 62 Marshall Street, Johannesburg 2001, and Charter Consolidated Limited, P.O. Box 102, Charter House, Park Street, Ashford, Kent TN24 8EQ, England.

Holders of share warrants to bearer are notified that the dividend is payable on or after October 5 1979 upon presentation of coupon No. 63 (marked "South Africa") only at the offices of Barclays National Bank Limited, Stock Exchange Branch, Diagonal Street, Johannesburg 2001, South Africa—Union Bank of Switzerland, Bahnhofstrasse 45, Zurich, Switzerland—Credit du Nord, 6 & 8 Boulevard Haussmann, Paris 9e, France, and Banque Bruxelles Lambert, 2 Rue de la Regence, 1000 Brussels, Belgium. Coupons must be left at least four clear days for examination.

Note: Proceeds of dividends in respect of coupons marked "South Africa" may, at the request of the depositors, be converted through an authorised dealer to exchange in the Republic of South Africa into any currency. The effective rate of exchange for conversion into any such currency will be that prevailing at the time the proceeds of the dividends are deposited with the authorised dealer in exchange. By order of the board Anglo American Corporation of South Africa Limited Secretaries per H. J. E. Stanley Companies Secretary London Office: 40 Holborn Viaduct EC1P 1AJ

Move to oust Brit. Dredging board

A former chairman of British Dredging, the loss-making company in which Bredco Mixed Concrete owns nearly 25 per cent, will attempt to oust the rest of the present Board at a special meeting later this month.

Backed by 13.7 per cent of the company's shares held by himself, family and associates, Mr. D. Mostyn Bowles has forced British Dredging to schedule an extraordinary meeting on August 31 at the annual meeting.

He is seeking to remove the whole Board, apart from himself, and to appoint Mr. Price Stephens as his fellow director. Mr. Mostyn Bowles is currently a non-executive Board member. The present chairman, Mr. Bryan Clark, said the Board would oppose vigorously the resolutions to change the Board composition and size.

Last year, the company trimmed its trading loss to £170,450 from £756,820. However, after inclusion of the £830,000 profit on the sale of its London marine dredging interests and nearly £12,000 from a surplus on debenture stock redemption, it ended up with a net profit of £602,300 against a loss the previous year of £368,110.

Provisions qualified

The company's auditors, Deloitte Haskins and Sells, have qualified the accounts, stating they are unable to determine whether certain provisions are adequate or excessive. One provision concerns £150,000 against the long-term debtor of £400,000 due from the purchasers of the group's interest in Pauls Federated Merchants. The other is for £700,000 against losses occurring in the closure of a Plymouth Engineering and possible losses in the event of closure or disposal of the European operations.

Mr. Clark told shareholders in a statement sent out with the accounts that "your company is now ready to return to full health." He added that the action proposed by Mr. Mostyn Bowles could only have an adverse effect on the company's progress and the share price.

DIVIDENDS ANNOUNCED

Table with columns: Company, Current payment, Date of payment, Dividend, Total. Includes Allis Investment, A. American Gold Int., Associated Tooling, Automotive Prods. Int., Diamond Stylus, David Dixon (Leeds), Estates Property, Hallite, Hawley Leisure, Longton Transport, Malaysian Tio, Mercantile Inv. Trst. Int., Ratcliffe, Reydon, Rights and Issues Int., David S. Smith, Wolf Electric Tools Int.

Dividends shown pence per share net except where otherwise stated. \* Equivalent after allowing for scrip issue. † Includes special 0.3p for company's jubilee. ‡ 0.5p final forecast. † Gross throughout. ‡ Includes 0.25p representing arrears of dividend due from Shell Transport and Trading. \*\* South African cents throughout. †† Includes 0.06333p for ACT reduction now payable.

English & NY earnings up

For the first half of 1979, total gross revenue of English and New York Trust Company showed little change at £1.18m, compared with £1.15m. Management expenses took £69,129 (£68,130), loan interest £42,130 (£17,258) and tax £372,599 (£335,706). Earnings per 25p stock unit are up from 1.5p to 1.74p and net interim dividend is raised from 1.25p to 1.5p. The directors intend to recommend a final payment of not less than 2p (1.75p).

INTERIM REPORT TO SHAREHOLDERS 1979

The unaudited group earnings for the six months to 30th June were as follows:

Table with columns: Half Year to 30.6.79, Half Year to 30.6.78, Full Year 1978. Rows include Group Sales, Earnings Gross, Estimated Taxation.

Both Great Bridge and its Canadian subsidiary have had a satisfactory first half, although the sterling value of Canadian earnings has been reduced by Exchange Rate movements. Prospects for the second half are somewhat clouded by the possibility of a recession in the U.S. and the continued strength of Sterling, nevertheless a satisfactory performance is anticipated. Following the lapsing of dividend controls, your Directors have declared an interim dividend of 10p (0.75p) per Ordinary Share payable on 1st November to all shareholders on the Register at 7th September 1979 and if the results for the year compare favourably with 1978 your Directors would expect to recommend a final dividend of 20p (1.3683p) per share.

9th August 1979 F. R. RATCLIFF (Chairman)

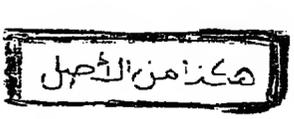
BIBBY J. BIBBY AND SONS LIMITED

Half-year profits reach new peak

Interim Report for the 26 weeks ended 30 June 1979

Table with columns: 1979, 1978, Change. Rows include Sales, Trading Surplus, Profit before Tax, Profit after tax but before extraordinary items, Net dividend paid (pence per share).

J Bibby & Sons Limited, Richmond House, 1 Rumford Place, Liverpool L3 9QQ





MINING NEWS

Amgold riding a wave of rising income

BY KENNETH MARSTON, MINING EDITOR

SPARKLING results for the half-year to August were announced by Anglo American Gold Investment (Amgold), the major South African gold mining investment company in which Anglo American Corporation has a stake of 45 per cent.

Earnings for the period have advanced to R52.3m (£28.1m) from R29.6m in the eight months to end-August 1978; because of its timing investment income for the two periods is comparable. Market expectations of the latest interim dividend are surpassed with a payment of 175 cents compared with 100 cents a year ago.

Amgold is riding a wave of high prosperity with its rising dividends from the South African gold mining industry. Further increased dividends can be expected in the current year, notably from the Orange Free State mines which are due to declare their final in October.

Although the group's investment income does not accrue evenly throughout the year, the chances are that the second half results will at least match those of the first half which produced earnings equal to 232 cents (125p) per share.

Earlier forecasts of total 1979 earnings of around 370 cents and a minimum total dividend of 300 cents now have to be upgraded. A 1979 dividend total of 375 cents-400 cents seems to be more likely.

The market value of the group's quoted investments at August 5 was R1.16bn, equal to R52.94 (£28.34) per share. The latest results were not released during market hours yesterday when Amgold shares closed 3 up at £18 1/2 in a generally strong gold session.

at the end of 1977. It is intended to produce annually 3m tons of blast furnace pellets and 3m tons of low silica pellets.

IMM group to visit China

THE current president of the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy, Dr. D. A. Temple, is to lead a group visit to October to the Peoples Republic of China at the invitation of the Chinese Society of Metals.

The mission, which has been arranged by the IMM, will consist of twenty members covering economic geology, mining engineering, mineral processing and extractive metallurgy.

The visit will be from October 15 to 30 and during the first week there will be lectures, technical presentations and discussions with senior officials in Peking. These will be followed by a tour to research establishments, universities and mining and metallurgical complexes throughout the Peoples Republic.

Dr. Temple is to be succeeded by Mr. J. T. M. Taylor who has been elected IMM president for the 1980-81 session. Mr. Taylor is with the Union Corporation group and has been concerned with mineral exploration, mining, mine project evaluation and, more recently, with oil and gas exploration.

1978 total of C\$4.45m. An extra dividend of 10 cents will be paid with the regular quarterly distribution of 15 cents on September 14.

CDPC Mining, an affiliate of the Construction and Development Corporation of the Philippines, plans to start production of molybdenum in September.

The initial annual export target is between 300 and 600 tonnes of concentrates. CDPC is also carrying out a feasibility study for the expansion of its copper concentrator which produces molybdenum as a by-product.

O. H. Steel Foundries and Engineers of Sheffield, one of the steel foundries on the Glasgow-based Weir group, has won a £500,000 order for cold chiselling equipment to be used in China.

The order has been placed by Mining and Transport Engineering of Amsterdam which is building three dredges for Heilungkiang, the most northerly province of China.

Malaysia Tin reports a net profit for the year to March 31 of £38,405 compared with £23,395 for 1977-78. The dividend is raised to 3.25p net, from 2.6p, payable September 28.

Tin production better in July

GENERALLY better tin concentrate output for July are reported by the Eastern mines in the Malaysia Mining Corporation group. Ayer Hitam, for example, has commenced its current financial year in a more encouraging style after the poor June output.

Despite a one-week closure of its Takuapa dredge in Thailand, Northern Kinta has produced more in the past month, bringing the total for the first four months of the current financial year to 575 tonnes against 556 tonnes a year ago. Sungei Besi's four-month total comes out at 653 tonnes against 649 tonnes.

Output at Berjuntan, however, remains disappointing. The mine's three-month total is lagging at 924 tonnes compared with 1,140 tonnes a year ago. As reported here yesterday, the fall in output for the year to April 30 outweighed the benefits of higher prices to leave Berjuntan with a lower profit of M\$20.2m (£3.52m) against M\$20.2m in 1977-78.

The group's latest production figures are compared in the following table.

Table with 5 columns: Location, July, June, May, April. Rows include Ayer Hitam, Berjuntan, Kamunting, Kuala Kampar, Lower Perak, Malayan S. Kinta, Sth. Malayan, Sungei Besi, and Trench Mines.

MINING INVEST.

The Mining Investment Corporation has sold its investment of 211,988 shares of British Silk Premier Mines (38 per cent) for C\$457,375 (£173,840). This compares with a book value of approximately £78,000.

A further C\$42,625 (£16,200) in respect of the repayment of a loan is repayable to the company by British Silk following satisfactory restructuring of its finances.

British Silk is a Canadian registered mining investment company, which made a small loss in its last completed accounting period to January 31, 1979.

SYLTONE (engineering, pipe system supply and wholesale electrical distribution group)—Results for year to March 31, 1979, reported: Group fixed assets £1.63m (£1.57m), not current assets £3.06m (£2.24m). Bank overdraft £1.1m (£0.7m). Current assets £4.52m (£4.77m) (£4,666,113). Meeting, Birmingham, Leeds, September 6, at 2.30 pm.

WINTEN GROUP (cameras, photographic equipment)—Results for year ended March 31, 1979, reported July 17. Group fixed assets £1.7m (£1.7m). Current assets £2.5m (£2.5m). Net profit £0.2m (£0.2m). Chairman says it is particularly pleased with the increase in level of sales and profitability for 1978-1980. Having regard to increased strength of buying directors, the company might have some difficulty in maintaining margins on export business later this year. Busy St. Edmunds, August 30, at noon.

CANADIAN INDUSTRIAL HOLDINGS (leisure and timber group)—Results for the year to March 31, 1979, reported June 29. Group fixed assets £2.2m (£2.4m). Current assets £5.07m (£5.05m). Chairman is confident of further growth. Meeting, Manchester, on September 6, at 8pm.

INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT TRUST—Pre-tax revenue for six months to June 30, 1979, £215,327 (£158,100) against £127,722 (£107,274) for the corresponding period. Interim 1.5p (1.5p). Board says increase in interim is to reduce disparity. It should not be taken as indication that total distribution will be increased in same proportion.

BENNY AND SONS (bacon, meat packer and canner)—Turnover half year to March 31, 1979, £14,000 (£12,860). Pre-tax profit £28,706 (£198,757). Tax nil (same). Comparisons adjusted. Ordinary dividend £28,880 (£24,981). Company is subsidiary of E. M. Benny (Holdings).

DAVID DIXON AND SON (LEADS) (woollen fabric maker, subsidiary of David Dixon and Son (Holdings))—Dividend 9.6p year to March 31, 1979 (£1,247,000). Net profit £28,880 (£24,981). Earnings per share 11.25p (£1.06p).

ASSAM-DOOARS HOLDINGS—The directors say it is hoped the 1978 accounts will be available in early November, 1979.

SOUTHERN STADIUM—Greyhound meetings first half 1979 95 (85). Totalisation £112,145 (£87,528). Average £1,725 (£1,548). Operating costs £28,020 (£25,702). Operating profit £25,567 (£34,289) and revised investment income £16,832 (£21,088). (£1,247,000). Net profit £28,880 (£24,981). Earnings per share 11.25p (£1.06p).

Close outcome expected as Redman lifts offer

JUST A day before its offer closed, Redman International has increased its cash bid for Wellman Engineering Corporation by 5p to 70p per share. Taking in Wellman's proposed net final dividend of 1.41p per share, the offer values Wellman at just over £8m.

On the most recently published defence forecast, the increased terms imply an exit p/e of 8.4 and a yield of 9.7 per cent. Shares in Wellman climbed 3 1/2p yesterday to 68p.

The bid has been accepted in respect of 6.1 per cent of the Wellman equity which, taken with 19.87 per cent acquired before the bid and a further 1.1 per cent purchased during the offer, amounts to 26.07 per cent. Hambros Bank, advising Redman, owns a further 4.57 per cent which it will assent to the offer. The bidder thus controls 30.64 per cent.

In normal circumstances, the offer would not have been raised until the closing day when Redman would have been able to compare the level of acceptances and, if necessary, extend the offer for at least another two weeks. In this instance, Wellman holders will be voting on the proposed £5.17m acquisition of the U.S. General Electric Industrial Heater Business Department at an EGM on Monday and Redman has again asserted that its offer will lapse if the IHBD deal goes ahead.

The Wellman defence stressed yesterday that the increased offer was "an attempt by Redman Heenan to frustrate the acquisition of IHBD and is not in the best interests of Wellman's business. Its shareholders or its employees."

Remain institutional shareholders of Wellman are understood to have described Redman's first shot as being "a fraction on the mean side" and Hambros reacted yesterday to "kill this one beyond doubt".

convincing that "a little bit more would swing the day". Institutions would not, in most instances, expect to make a final decision until this morning and both sides admit that the outcome is "going to be a nail biter".

Sunley will get £16m for Isola

Bernard Sunley Investment Trust will receive more than £16m for Isola 2000, ski resort it owned in Southern France and has now sold to Middle Eastern interests, according to reports from Paris.

The resort, which has been making heavy losses, has been acquired by Societe Internationale pour l'Aménagement et le Développement Foncier (SIADF), a Beirut based real estate company. In the year to March, 1978 the resort lost £65,000 and similar losses were expected in the 1979 season.

Sunley's figures for the year are expected early next week. The company is currently involved in merger talks with Eagle Star.

The French ski resort includes around 1,000 apartments, three hotels, shops, restaurants, and sports facilities apart from skiing. French Government approval of the deal includes authorisation for the new owners to build an additional 800 apartments.

The recent oil crisis has raised a question mark over ski resort economics. The 1974 fuel crisis hit them hard.

WEDGWOOD TALKS SUSPENDED

Talks aimed at securing the eventual control by Wedgwood of the Italian ceramics company, Pozzi Ginori, have been suspended by mutual agreement.

Wedgwood says the reason for the suspension is uncertainty over the terms of the separation from Liguas, the troubled Italian group, of its interest in Pozzi Ginori. The actual majority shareholder in Pozzi Ginori is the SAI insurance company, part of the financial empire to Sig. Rinaldo Usini.

The discussions were intended to arrange finance for the Italian company from an international group of bankers, with options for Wedgwood to acquire an eventual controlling stake. It is believed the vehicle for this would have been a five-year £5m convertible loan.

BRENT CHEMICALS ITALIAN DEAL

Brent Chemicals has paid £550m (£296,000) cash for Wyandotte SpA of Milan, formerly a subsidiary of BASF Wyandotte Corporation, which is part of BASF of West Germany.

The deal extends Brent's licence to market the Wyandotte range of specialty chemicals to Italy and southern Europe, thereby giving it full European coverage.

Wyandotte SpA's sales last year totalled £3.03m (£1.63m) with pre-tax profits at £150m (£81,000). Net tangible assets were £140m (£74,000).

JOHN JAMES

The offer by Wolsley-Hughes to acquire the capital of John James Group have become unconditional as to acceptances. Acceptances have been received in respect of 27,627,940 ordinary (about 99 per cent) of which 22,764,372 (including £220,000 held by Dawn James Charitable Foundation) are in respect of the cash offer. This has now closed.

BRITISH TAR £2M ACQUISITION

British Tar Products has paid around £2m for part of the business of British Tanners Products, which is half owned by the National Enterprise Board and called in the Receivers late last month.

It has acquired the fixed assets, stock and business of the company's chemicals division, Hodgson Tanning, whose main activities cover the extraction of tanning chemicals from vegetable materials and the manufacture of synthetic tanning chemicals and other products.

Half of the purchase price has been paid in cash. The rest is being met by the issue of £1m nominal of 10p per cent unsecured loan stock 1992.

The stock is unlisted and convertible at any time into ordinary shares of British Tar on the basis of one share for every 45p of the stock.

The stock has been placed by the Receivers with investment institutions, namely the National Coal Board Pension Funds, the British Rail Pension Fund, London Trust, and Jersey General Investment Trust.

With existing bank facilities and the stock issue, British Tar says it is satisfied that it has enough working capital for present needs.

Britannic renews its support for Bestobell independence

Renewed support for Bestobell's vigorous defence against the BTR bid has come from Britannic Assurance, which said yesterday it continued to oppose the increased terms.

We are prepared to stay with Bestobell," said Mr. Frank Weaver, secretary and investment manager of Britannic which, with its 10 per cent stake, is Bestobell's largest shareholder.

Britannic asserted its desire to see Bestobell remain independent at the time of the first BTR bid, worth £30m. Since then, the offer has been raised to £29m on the basis of the new 220p cash offer, with an alternative exchange of 11 BTR shares for 15 of Bestobell.

Mr. Weaver said Britannic saw Bestobell as "a sound recovery situation," noting that BTR seemed to be trying to acquire it at the bottom of the cycle.

Britannic is also a shareholder in BTR, with an interest of nearly 5 per cent.

Institutions hold around half of Bestobell's equity, Kleinwort Benson being the largest. Mr. Weaver said yesterday that further institutional support was expected.

Taking their cue from the general market decline, shares of both companies slipped yesterday. Bestobell ended the day 2p down at 226p, while BTR lost 5p to close at 327p.

NO PROBES

The following proposed mergers are not to be referred to

RESULTS AND ACCOUNTS IN BRIEF

ANGLO-AMERICAN CORPORATION (C&I). Earnings per 25p share 6.07p (5.01p). Net asset value 17p (142p). Final dividend 1.5p (1.42p). Dividend cover 4.0 (3.5). RIGHTS AND ISSUES INVESTMENT TRUST—Pre-tax revenue for first half 1979 £68,067 (£77,066). Management expenses £1,753 (£1,064). Tax £28,445 (£19,584). NAV per 25p share £1.75 (£1.06). Dividend cover 4.0 (3.5). Interim dividend 1.5p (1.42p). Interim dividend cover 4.0 (3.5). Shareholders' funds £4,07m (£2,98m). Decrease in liquid funds £1,09m (£1,09m). Shareholders' funds £4,07m (£2,98m). Increase in current year group has benefited from high quality rental business at record rate. Haughton Financial Services holds 13.5 per cent of issued equity. Meeting, Hove, August 21, at 5.30 pm.

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Hallite halved to £528,000

Taxable profits of Hallite Holdings, the synthetic rubber and plastic precision seals group, were more than halved in the year to April 28, 1979. The group saw the taxable surplus tumble from a record £1,071m to £528,024 on turnover of £7.15m, against £7.02m.

Substantially lower profits were forecast at midway when the pre-tax surplus was down from £492,199 to £119,380. The directors then said orders from the UK remained low, but continued progress was expected in overseas markets.

But they now point to an improving profit trend in the second half of last year, and expect to see the year-end surplus improve for 1979/80. Orders in hand are at a satisfactory level.

After tax of £12,090, against £298,817, stated earnings per share are well down on 33.73p to 13.75p. But the net payment per 50p share is lifted from 6.52p to 6.7497p with a final of 4.5697p.

EPIC finishes ahead at £1.4m and pays 4.25p

PRE-TAX income of Epitax Property Investment Company rose from £1.14m to £1.39m for the year ended April 30, 1979, and the net dividend is stepped up to 4.25p with a final of 2.75p. Last year's total being 2.35p.

Earnings per 25p share are shown at 4.8p, compared with 3.85p. Tax took £470,000 (£348,000) and there was interest of £219,000 (£208,000) arising in 1979 attributable to the Belgian development. The available surplus came through at £703,000 (£524,000) and with the unappropriated profit of £270,000 (£392,000) brought forward made £1,273,000 (£916,000).

Dividends will absorb £522,000 (£346,000) leaving £751,000 (£570,000) to be carried forward. All group properties, except one which is in the course of being sold, were revalued as at April 30 at £41.32m. This produced a surplus over book value of £268,000 (£178,000) and minority interests resulting in a net asset value per share of 194p.

Optimism at Abwood

Turnover at Abwood Machine Tools for the first quarter of 1979-80 "continues the satisfactorily improving trend begun last year," Mr. G. Suckling, chairman, says in his annual statement.

This, together with the present level of the order book, gives him "reasonable justification for further optimism in the current year."

As already known, taxable profits reached £75,108 (£42,684) in the year to March 31, 1979, on turnover after £1.29m (£0.92m). A rights issue was announced at the same time as the results.

Wolf Tools declines to £1.08m

LOWER margins due to a lack of growth in international trade, and severe price competition generated by strong sterling left sales and profits of Wolf Electric Tools (Holdings) down for the first six months of 1979.

The net interim dividend is raised from 0.625p to 0.85p per 25p share and an additional 0.0633p is payable for 1978 on ACT reduction—last year's final was 0.78944p.

Year-end fall to £2.5m for Assam Inv.

Taxable profits of Assam Investments fell from £3.7m to £2.46m in 1978. And the directors say that because of the seasonal nature of the company's business, results for the next accounting period, the 18 months to June 30, 1979, must be much lower than for 1978 alone.

Tax for the year takes £1.59m, against £2.5m and there are 100,000 shares in issue. The Board adds that the Indian Government has permitted resumption of remittance.

BANK RETURN

Table with 2 columns: Wednesday Aug. 8, 1979 and Increase (+) or Decrease (-) for week. Rows include Liabilities, Current Accounts, Public Deposits, Special Deposits, Bankers Deposits, Reserves & Other Accounts.

Table with 2 columns: Wednesday Aug. 8, 1979 and Increase (+) or Decrease (-) for week. Rows include Assets, Government Securities, Advances & Other Accounts, Premises Equipment & Other Secs., Notes, Coin.

Table with 2 columns: Wednesday Aug. 8, 1979 and Increase (+) or Decrease (-) for week. Rows include Liabilities, Notes Issued, In Circulation, In Banking Department.

Table with 2 columns: Wednesday Aug. 8, 1979 and Increase (+) or Decrease (-) for week. Rows include Assets, Government Debt, Other Government Securities, Other Securities.

Comparative figures for the year have been restated following the adoption of SSAP 12 and SSAP 15.

In his annual statement, Mr. H. H. Harmer says work on developing and producing sealing products for offshore oil well drilling is being rewarded. Large orders received this year are ensuring a good return on investment.

The group also expects to continue to share in the growing mining developments in the UK and abroad. It has established good contacts with Eastern Europe and benefits from these are expected to come through during 1980.

Mr. Harmer says Hallite Plastics is one of the leaders in the pneumatics field and the returns on this group, technical and marketing effort will start to be reflected in the latter part of the current year.

On exports, generally the chairman is looking for another increase this year—during the last 12 months the group lifted exports by a third to £1.42m.

Profits and amounts totalling £205,755 have been received. This is the first part of the post-tax profit earned in 1978 and the initial annual instalment of loan capital repayable by the company's new Indian subsidiary over a five-year period. The group expects payments of the money due (amounting to £5.33m) to continue and another remittance is expected soon.

Turnover at Abwood Machine Tools for the first quarter of 1979-80 "continues the satisfactorily improving trend begun last year," Mr. G. Suckling, chairman, says in his annual statement.

This, together with the present level of the order book, gives him "reasonable justification for further optimism in the current year."

As already known, taxable profits reached £75,108 (£42,684) in the year to March 31, 1979, on turnover after £1.29m (£0.92m). A rights issue was announced at the same time as the results.

The net interim dividend is raised from 0.625p to 0.85p per 25p share and an additional 0.0633p is payable for 1978 on ACT reduction—last year's final was 0.78944p.

Taxable profits of Assam Investments fell from £3.7m to £2.46m in 1978. And the directors say that because of the seasonal nature of the company's business, results for the next accounting period, the 18 months to June 30, 1979, must be much lower than for 1978 alone.

Tax for the year takes £1.59m, against £2.5m and there are 100,000 shares in issue. The Board adds that the Indian Government has permitted resumption of remittance.

The company-owned the freehold of some of the shops sold, hence the increase in the Capital Profits of £58,000.

The actual profit on trading, although down on the year by about £7,000, has in fact improved considerably during the second half. During the first half of the year the trading profit was down, due mainly to an unplanned stock shortage at our Burton-on-Trent and St. Leonards and also increased stock losses at the branches. The fall in profits has now been very largely recouped and, at the time of going to print, the company appears to be trading satisfactorily.

You will see from the auditors' report that the company has not complied with the requirements of the Institute of Chartered Accountants so far as depreciation of freehold properties is concerned. Our properties have been regularly revalued and we have been advised by our property experts that the market continues to rise. A lot of money is spent annually on maintaining our properties and the Directors can see no point in depreciating an appreciated asset. Our property consultants advise us that the current market value of the freehold properties as at the 28th February, 1979, would be not less than £3,621,534.

FULCRUM INVESTMENT TRUST LIMITED. Net asset value (unaudited) as at 31st July, 1979. Income shares: 40.6p. Capital shares: 3.0p.

Carclo Summary of Results. Table with 4 columns: Year to 31st March, 1979, 1978. Rows include Turnover £000, Profit before tax £000, Earnings per 25p Ordinary share, Dividend per Ordinary share of 25p (net), Dividend cover (times), Ordinary shareholders funds per share of 25p.

ANGLO-AMERICAN SECURITIES CORPORATION LIMITED. Interim Financial Statement for the six months ended 15th July, 1979. Table with 4 columns: Year ended 15th July, 1979, Six months ended 15th July 1979, Six months ended 15th July 1978, Six months ended 15th July 1978. Rows include Gross revenue, Less: Expenses and Interest, Net revenue before taxation, Less: Taxation, NET REVENUE RETAINED, Dividend on Ordinary Shares payable 24th August, 1979.

London W.I. Luxury Furnished Apartments. Green Garden House, St. Christopher's Place in quiet, picturesque, pedestrianised area near Oxford Street. Fully-equipped apartments with maid service. For details of availability and charges contact: Greengarden Investments Limited, Green Garden House, St. Christopher's Place, London W.1M 5HD. Tel: 01-486 2771.

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Dollar eases, pound firms

DOLLAR'S recent period of active stability came to an end in currency markets...

FRANKFURT—There was no intervention by the Bundesbank yesterday when the dollar was fixed at DM 1.8588...

EUROPEAN CURRENCY UNIT RATES

Table with columns: Currency, Central rate, % change, % change adjusted for divergence, Divergence limit %.

CHANGE CROSS RATES

Table with columns: August 9, Pound Sterling, U.S. Dollar, Deutsche Mark, Japanese Yen, French Franc, Swiss Franc, Dutch Guilder, Italian Lira, Canadian Dollar, Belgian Franc.

NO-CURRENCY INTEREST RATES

Table with columns: Aug. 9, Sterling, U.S. Dollar, Canadian Dollar, Dutch Guilder, Swiss Franc, West German Mark, French Franc, Italian Lira, Asian 6, Japanese Yen.

INTERNATIONAL MONEY MARKET

Paris rates unchanged

Bank of France bought 100-100 per cent. The six- and 12-month rates were also static...

MONEY MARKET

Adequate credit supply

Bank of England minimum lending rate 14 per cent (since June 12 1979)...

INDON MONEY RATES

Table with columns: Aug. 9 1979, Sterling Certificate of deposit, Interbank deposits, Local Authority deposits, Finance House deposits, Company Deposits, Discount deposits, Treasury Bills, Eligible Bank Bills, Fine Trade Bills.

THE POUND SPOT AND FORWARD

Table with columns: Aug. 9, Day's spread, Close, One month, % Three p.a., % Six months p.a.

THE DOLLAR SPOT AND FORWARD

Table with columns: Aug. 9, Day's spread, Close, One month, % Three p.a., % Six months p.a.

CURRENCY RATES

Table with columns: Aug. 9, Bank rate, Special Drawing Rights, European Currency Unit, Aug. 9, Bank of England, Morgan Guaranty, Index, Currencies.

OTHER MARKETS

Table with columns: August 9, Argentina Peso, Australia Dollar, Brazil Cruzeiro, Canadian Dollar, Danish Kroner, D. Mark, Hong Kong Dollar, Kuwait Dinar, Luxembourg Franc, Malaysia Dollar, New Zealand Dollar, Saudi Arab. Riyal, Singapore Dollar, S.W. African Rand.

Advertisement for Redman Heenan International Limited. Text: 'TO THE ORDINARY SHAREHOLDERS OF THE WELLMAN ENGINEERING CORPORATION LIMITED. INCREASED OFFER FOR YOUR SHARES. Redman Heenan has announced that it will make an increased offer for your shares...'

Advertisement for Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan, Ltd. Text: 'Whatever the size of your project, whatever the scope of your ambitions, come to the Long-Term Credit Bank. As one of Japan's leading long-term credit banks...'

NORTH AMERICAN NEWS

Lehman moves into real estate services

By Our New York Staff THE DIVERSIFICATION OF U.S. securities companies into real estate services has been taken a significant stage further by Lehman Brothers Kuhn Loeb, a leading Wall Street investment bank, which is to acquire one of the country's top mortgage brokers, Sonnenblick-Goldman Corporation.

Chrysler plans sales drive

BY JOHN WYLES IN NEW YORK

CHRYSLER Corporation is planning a new sales campaign aimed at reducing its crippling burden of unsold vehicles, amid indications that it is requesting \$1bn of government aid in running into difficulties in Washington. Chrysler desperately needs to reduce its inventory of 80,000 unsold cars and trucks, worth \$700m, in order to bring in funds to boost its working capital and help cover possibly large operating losses.

White House and Treasury officials on Wednesday, at which he presented further information on the company's financial plight at the end of a six-month period in which it has lost a record \$260m. Neither the Treasury nor the White House is offering much in the way of comment, except to say that the Treasury's investigations are proceeding at maximum speed.

wants to be satisfied that the \$1bn would actually turn the company round and ensure its long-term survival. In addition, Chrysler has not been able to present a possible role for its bankers, employees and stockholders which would indicate that they too are prepared to make strenuous efforts to ensure its survival.

ITT wins concession over disclosures

By Our New York Staff

INTERNATIONAL Telephone and Telegraph has won an unusual concession from the Securities and Exchange Commission in the settlement of litigation which had accused the company of making millions of dollars of "illegal, improper, corrupt and questionable payments" abroad.

Norwegian shipping group squeezed in first six months

BY FAY GJESTER IN OSLO

LEIF HOEGH, a leading Norwegian shipping group, reports a slightly lower return on capital in first-half 1979 than in the same period a year earlier, although operating profits showed a small increase. Freight earnings from the fleet operated by Hoegh (including vessels chartered from other owners) rose to Nkr 1,919m from Nkr 995m in the first half of 1978, and operating profit, before depreciation and interest payments, was Nkr 193m (\$38.60m) against Nkr 170m.

Miller Brewing account shifts

BY DAVID LASCELLES IN NEW YORK

THE Miller Brewing Company, a division of the large Philip Morris consumer products group and maker of the fastest-growing beer brand in the U.S., has surprised the New York advertising community by switching its account to a new and as yet little-known advertising agency.

The change is important, since Miller has moved from number seven in the brewing league, when Philip Morris acquired it in 1970, to number two today, largely as a result of aggressive marketing. Analysts also believe that Miller could judge Anheuser-Busch from its number one spot in the next two to three years.

Optimism at McDonnell Douglas

St. Louis — The crash on May 25 of an American Airlines DC-10 and subsequent grounding of the Trijet will not have a long-term impact of any significance on McDonnell Douglas, according to Mr. Sanford N. McDonnell, president and chief executive of the group. The Douglas Aircraft subsidiary which makes the DC-9 and DC-10 will continue to play a significant role in overall corporate strategy, he stressed.

Commission clears bidders for Bodcaw

By Our New York Staff THE THREE bidders for Bodcaw, the closely-held Texas timber company, have received provisional clearance from the Federal Trade Commission. But the FTC may try to reverse a takeover later if it deems it anti-competitive.

Gain by Asbestos Corporation

BY ROBERT GIBBENS IN MONTREAL

ASBESTOS CORPORATION, which is controlled by General Dynamics Corporation, the U.S. aircraft and building materials manufacturer, and whose Quebec assets at present face a takeover move by the Quebec Provincial Government, had first half earnings of C\$8.3m (U.S.\$1.09m) or C\$2.93 a share against C\$7.2m or C\$2.55 a year ago. Sales were C\$86m compared with C\$82m. A dividend of 60 cents is proposed.

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Advertisement for S.A. BRAIN & COMPANY, LIMITED, featuring 11% Second cumulative preference shares of £1 each at par. Includes a logo of a horse and rider.

Formula set for Pemex facility

BY JOHN EVANS

THE U.S. bankers' acceptance facility of up to \$1.5bn for the state oil agency Petroleos Mexicanos (Pemex), Mexico's largest international financing to date, is about to be syndicated among major banks. Bank of America, as the agent bank, is organising the syndication operation, plus an extra margin of 20 basis points.

Canadian dollar Eurobond for Credit Foncier

A C\$300m issue for Credit Foncier Franco-Canadian was launched yesterday by Credit Suisse First Boston. This is the first new Canadian dollar-denominated bond to be floated since Inmat came to the market for C\$10m late last May.

FT INTERNATIONAL BOND SERVICE

The list shows the 200 latest international bond issues for which an adequate secondary market exists. For further details of these or other bonds see the complete list of Eurobond prices published on the second Monday of each month.

Table of international bond issues with columns for Issued, Bid, Offer, Day, Week, Yield, and various other financial metrics. Includes sections for U.S. DOLLAR, DEUTSCHE MARK, and CONVERTIBLE.

Advertisement for Private Investment Company for Asia (PICA) S.A., featuring US\$20,000,000 Floating Rate Notes 1986. Includes agent bank information: Chemical Bank, London.

Advertisement for Export Development Corporation (An agent of Her Majesty in right of Canada) and Société pour l'expansion des exportations (Mandataire de Sa Majesté du chef du Canada). Features US\$150,000,000 9 3/4% Notes Due 1984 and lists participating banks like Credit Suisse First Boston Limited, Wood Gundy Limited, etc.

Advertisement for Societe pour l'expansion des exportations, featuring US\$150,000,000 9 3/4% Notes Due 1984. Includes a globe logo and lists participating banks like Credit Suisse First Boston Limited, Wood Gundy Limited, etc.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including 'STOCK display' and 'NY'.

INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES and FINANCE

NORWEGIAN STOCK MARKET

Displaying a clean pair of heels

By William Dullforce, recently in Oslo

THE MOST bullish of the world's stock markets this year is also one of the smallest. The general index of the Oslo Bourse has climbed 30 per cent since January 1 and some 45 per cent on the low point of March, 1978. Turnover was close to Kr 340m (\$63m) in the first half of this year and, if the trend continues, it should emerge for 1979 roughly triple last year's level of Nkr 225m.

The upsurge in share prices has been even stronger in terms of the indices calculated by Capital International, the Swiss-based investment services group. While the world index was showing a gain of 41 per cent over the first seven months of this year, the Oslo stock market rose by 84 per cent.

The Norwegian bourse is thus showing a very clean pair of heels to the rest of the world. Canada was the second best performer up to the end of July with a gain of 24 per cent followed closely by the UK which had risen by 20 per cent.

While share dealers are not unhappy about this development, more diffidence than jubilation is evident in the rather lingo Oslo Stock Exchange building overshadowed by the railway station. They are not yet sure that the improvement in trading really implies a revival of faith among badly battered Norwegian stockholders.

On July 17 the general index reached 98, but despite the rise in share prices this year, the index is still a far cry from the 178 touched on January 25, 1974. Speculation in the shares of the oil companies, hastily formed after the discovery of

North Sea oil produced a turnover of Nkr 1,740m for 1978. Since that year the Oslo bourse has taken a lot of punishment. The signal for its present recovery could be said to be a hint last summer that the Labour Government was having second thoughts about the value of the stock exchange as a source of investment capital. The wind was knocked out of

the market in 1974 after the Government had made it clear that only one private company, Saga, would be allowed to share in the North Sea oil development (the state has a majority holding in Norsk Hydro).

That blow was followed by the shipping crisis, which cut the flow of shipowner earnings to the bourse, and by the implementation of the Labour Party's plans to "democratise" the banks. Then, rising domestic costs priced Norwegian exports out of their markets and the industrial shares, which form the backbone of the bourse, declined.

Worried by the low level of industrial investments, the Finance Ministry announced last summer that it was thinking of ways to stimulate the stock market. This reversal of policy coincided with the negotiations for the purchase by Norway of a 40 per cent holding in Volvo, the Swedish car and truck group. The stock market was suspicious both of the Ministry's intentions and of the Volvo deal, which would have entailed flooding the bourse with Volvo shares. The Volvo deal aborted and the Finance Ministry's intention was baulked by the trade unions, which made abandonment of its plans to stimulate the stock market a condition for their acceptance of a wages and prices freeze.

The signal for the upsurge in share prices could be said to be the hint that the Norwegian Government was having second thoughts about the value of the stock market as a source of investment capital.

Shareholders have to take a long-term dividend view since Hydro is writing off its oil investments over six years. But the Board is expected to fulfil this year its promise to complete the write-up of the face value of the shares to Nkr 100 from the current Nkr 80. By paying an unchanged percentage in dividend it would still boost shareholders' income.

Norwegian private holdings in Hydro are now no more than 17 or 18 per cent, more being held in Paris and Zurich. Dealings by Swiss banks, in particular, have boosted the Hydro price this year and there has been some speculation without any hard evidence that Arab money could be involved.

The Hydro price rose from around Nkr 170 last autumn to Nkr 540 at the end of July. It has been trading in the Nkr 470-495 range since.

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Heavy tax charge hits Malayawata

By Wang Sulong in Kuala Lumpur

MALAYAWATA, Malaysia's biggest steel company, increased its trading profit by 75 per cent to 13.1m ringgit (US\$6.1m) in the year to March. But because the company had to meet a heavy tax charge, net profit fell by 36 per cent to 5.7m ringgit. Previously, Malayawata had been paying nominal income tax because of its tax status and the huge capital allowances granted to the company. It is paying a dividend of 10 per cent tax free, the same as previously.

Construction groups make progress

By Our Kuala Lumpur Correspondent

TWO MALAYSIAN construction companies have reported sharp improvement in interim profits, reflecting the buoyancy of the residential housing market. Net profits at Bangar Raya Developments for the six months to June rose to 2.3m ringgit (US\$1.1m), from 903,000 ringgit in the same period last year.

Most of the profits came from the sale of houses it is building in Kuala Lumpur. The interim pre-tax profits of Selangor Properties rose by 20 per cent to 3.5m ringgit (US\$1.6m), with a substantial part of the profits coming from earnings on the development of the 54-acre Damansara town centre in Kuala Lumpur.

Each company said that it expected the property boom to continue, and that it was optimistic of better results for their second half.

More share parcels bought as Ansett battle continues

By James Forth in Sydney

A NUMBER of large special share parcels were bought yesterday in Ansett Transport Industries by groups battling over control of the airline, hotel and television group, though sharemarket activity quietened. Close to 45 per cent of Ansett's capital is now held by four groups, indicating that the situation should be resolved soon.

A total of 3.13m shares were traded in Melbourne and 333,000 in Sydney. The Melbourne transactions included a special parcel of 2.17m shares, or 2.3 per cent of the capital, which went to interests supporting the Ansett Board and its founder, Sir Reginald Ansett. The parcel was booked at AS1.70 and cost A\$3.67m (US\$41m), lifting the stake of

the "friends" to about 85 per cent. Another special parcel of 661,000 shares went to Ampol Petroleum, which also bought on the market floor during the day. Ampol has been buying off-market as well and is thought to hold close to 10 per cent of Ansett. The Western Australian contestant, Bell Group, controlled by Mr. Robert Holmes A'Court, announced at the start of trading that the company had obtained a further 1.8m shares through an on and off market trading, lifting its holdings to 3.6m shares, or 12.5 per cent.

Bell Group, which has indicated a desire to obtain a 20 per cent holding, increased its stake slightly with further market purchases during the day.

The fourth major shareholder, Thomas Nationwide Transport, has to date stayed out of the market bidding, although it reportedly wants to increase its interest from about 15 per cent to 20 per cent.

When trading started the protagonists stayed out of the market, with the result that the price dropped from the overnight level of AS1.86 to AS1.50. The bulk of the market sales were booked around this level, but the price was bid up near the close to AS1.80. It is widely believed that Ampol and TNT are interested in co-operating to exercise control of Ansett, a tactic they adopted for several years with cool group R. W. Miller following an inconclusive three-way takeover battle for Miller with Howard Smith.

Earnings growth for Reunert and Lenz

By Jim Jones in Johannesburg

REUNERT AND LENZ, the South African electrical and mechanical engineering group, raised its profit after tax in the year to June 30. This was despite lower revenue from contracting operations in South Africa and a lower contribution from its Zambian subsidiary.

While group turnover fell to R86.0m (\$101m), from R81.5m in 1978, taxed earnings advanced to R3.5m (\$4.1m), from R3.8m. The advance was achieved on the back of a better performance by the South African electrical

and mechanical equipment merchandising operations. Trading margins of this division have apparently improved considerably on the previous year's levels and a further improvement in operating results is projected by Mr. Mike Reunert, the chairman.

On the basis of higher profit projections for the current year, dividends totalling 31 cents have been declared, compared with 28.5 cents for 1978, or earnings a share of 96 cents, against 93 cents.

Advances by Kadoorie companies

By Philip Bowring in Hong Kong

RUBBER TRUST and Amalgamated Rubber, two of the three Kadoorie Group rubber plantation companies currently the subject of an offer from Highlands and Lowlands of Malaysia, have reported profit and dividend increases for the first half to March 31.

Rubber Trust's net profit for the six months was HK\$4.76m (U.S.\$925,000), up from HK\$4.36m, and interim dividend was raised to 14 cents from 13 cents.

Amalgamated's profit rose more sharply—to HK\$5.49m (U.S.\$1.1m) from HK\$4.13m and its interim dividend was lifted by 2 cents to 10 cents.

Hortors sells holding in stationery concern

By Our Johannesburg Correspondent

HORTORS (PTY.) has sold its 33 per cent stake in Hortors Walton (HWL), South Africa's largest commercial stationery company, to a number of institutions and individuals for about R2m (\$2.3m). HWL is to change its name to Waltons Stationery Ltd.

Last year the old Cape-based Waltons Stationery Company linked up with Hortors to form HWL. But revelations that HWL's holding company had close links with the former South African Department of Information had affected HWL shares on the Johannesburg stock exchange. HWL itself had no link with the Department of Information as it held no publishing interests.

Hongkong Realty ahead

By Our Hong Kong Correspondent

HONGKONG Realty and Trust Company, a property development subsidiary of the Wheelock Marden Group, increased its after-tax profits by 45 per cent to HK\$31.6m (U.S.\$10m) in the year ended March 31. In addition, net extraordinary profits amounted to HK\$26,000, against over HK\$20m in the previous year.

Investment fund sales fall in Germany

By Our Financial Staff

WEST GERMAN investment funds experienced a sharp decline in demand during the second quarter of this year. Sales fell to DM 600m (\$927m) compared to DM 1.3bn in the first quarter of 1979.

Investment funds have been badly hit by the setback in the German bond market after the upturn in interest rates that set in during the spring of 1978. First quarter sales totalled almost DM 4bn in 1978 but the three subsequent quarters could only muster a combined DM 4.6bn.

Bahrain Fishing Company loss

By Mary Frings in Bahrain

THE BAHRAIN Fishing Company, in which Ross Seafoods is manager, marketing agent and a 45 per cent shareholder, has warned that it may suspend operations in the Gulf at the end of the month, unless catches of shrimps improve.

The results on the 1978-79 fishing season, which ended in February, were BD 1.1m (US\$2.9m) down on the season before, for a net loss of BD 645,888 (\$1.7m). The dividend is passed, whereas in 1977-78 there was a 25 per cent dividend from profits of BD 464,121.

Shrimp catches were the lowest in the company's 14-year history—probably due to exceptional environmental conditions resulting from low rainfall and a cool summer, according to the directors' report. Fisheries experts, however, have blamed growing pollution of Gulf coastal waters, and the effect of extensive dredging for land reclamation on shrimp breeding stocks.

Shrimp catches for the new season, which began in June, have not covered operating expenses, the 1,000 or so Bahraini shareholders have

been told. Mr. Denis Revell, the manager, adds that catches had been lower even than last year, when they were half the average.

A substantial loss has been sustained since the end of the last financial year, and the net asset value of the company has further declined. Last year the general reserve fund was drawn down from BD 913,219 to BD 267,331. The Bahrain Fishing Company operates in Bahrain and Saudi Arabian waters, but poor inshore fishing has also been reported from Qatar.

Increase at Keck Seng

By Our Kuala Lumpur Correspondent

KECK SENG BERHAD, the plantation company, has reported a sharp increase in profits, as a result of higher output and favourable prices.

Pre-tax profits for the first half of this year rose to 4.5m ringgit (US\$2.1m), from 1.4m ringgit for the same period last year. The second-half is expected by the directors to be as good as the first-half, and an interim dividend of 10 per cent (7.5 per cent previously), is recommended.

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LONDON STOCK EXCHANGE

Gilts run out of steam and close below day's best Equities meet end-Account selling but Golds up again

Account Dealing Dates

\*First Declared Last Account Dealings Dates... Aug 9 Aug 10 Aug 11 Aug 12 Aug 13 Aug 14 Aug 15 Aug 16 Aug 17 Aug 18 Aug 19 Aug 20 Aug 21 Aug 22 Aug 23 Aug 24 Aug 25 Aug 26 Aug 27 Aug 28 Aug 29 Aug 30

Following a quietly steady opening, equity leaders drifted lower in a reduced trade, although total bargains still amounted to 16,222 compared with Wednesday's 13,563. Down a mere 0.3 to 10 am, the FT 30 share index eased progressively, to close at the day's lowest of 487.4, thus losing 6.3 of Wednesday's rise of 7.1, on the week so far, however, the index retains a net gain of nearly 10 points. Rises and falls in all FT-quoted industrials were almost in balance, but the former held sway for the seventh successive day.

Encouraged by the previous day's swift extension of the long top stock, Government Securities made fresh headway yesterday. Fresh demand at the long-end of the market pushed prices up by 4, but profit-taking after the enhanced levels left final quotations around 1 below the best. The former tap, Treasury 1 1/2 per cent, 2003-07, mirrored the trend, but finished only 1/2 better at 15 1/2, after touching 16 1/4. A reasonably brisk trade developed in the shorts which closed with gains ranging to 1/2.

A heavy well-balanced institutional business developed in the investment currency market where the premium touched a high of 3 1/2 per cent in the early trade following early weakness in sterling before reacting late to close at 2 1/2 per cent, a fraction higher than the overnight

level. Yesterday's SE conversion factor was 0.9122 (0.9225). Wednesday's flurry in traded options proved to be short-lived, and only 244 contracts were completed against the previous day's 543. Shell attracted the majority of yesterday's business, recording 100 trades.

Discounts better

Discount houses moved higher, taking their cue from this gilt-edged market. Allen Harvey and Ross advanced 10 to 37 1/2, while Alexander, 20 1/2, and Union, 37 1/2, improved 5 apiece. Gerard and National put on 4 to 25 1/2 and Cater Ryder hardened 3 to 35 1/2. The major clearing banks tended quietly firm with Barclays up 8 at 44 1/2 and Midland 6 to the good at 37 1/2. Hambros were an isolated firm feature in merchant banks, rising 7 to 31 1/2. Among Hire Purchases, UPT at 43 1/2, lost a penny to 42 1/2. In contrast to the previous day's rise of 3 which followed the better-than-expected annual results.

Lloyds Bank reacted from recent dollar-inspired strength. C. E. Heath cheapened 7 to 19 1/2 as did Minet, to 12 1/2, while Willis TFSber dipped 5 to 20 1/2. Although the American scientific report linking cancer with the consumption of certain Scotch whiskies had been countered by the manufacturers, nervousness crept into the Distillery sector. Distillers fell 4 to 23 1/2, while Highland, which produces the large-selling Cutty Sark brand, gave up 1/2 like amount to 9 1/2. Brewery leaders encountered a little end-account selling, Allied shedding a couple of pence to 9 1/2 and Scottish and Newcastle, at 45 1/2, losing most of Wednesday's rise of 2.

Quieter and occasionally easier conditions prevailed among leading Building descriptions, but interest was still being shown in selected secondary issues where hopes of cheaper money stimulated demand for Barratt Developments which touched 12 1/2 before settling at 12 1/2 for a gain of 2 on balance. Other housebuilders to attract attention included Federated Land and Building which put on 4 to 6 1/2 and Ward Holdings which added 3 to 5 1/2; the latter's interim results are due on August 24. Elsewhere, Brown and Jackson firmed 3 to 27 1/2, after 27 1/2, on renewed investment demand, while IDC moved up 7 to 13 1/2 in a thin market and Crouch Group improved 3 to 7 1/2.

ICI, at 53 1/2, encountered small scrappy selling and relinquished all of the previous day's gain of 7. Among other Chemicals, acquisition news stimulated

interest in Brent which firmed 5 to 23 1/2.

Harris Queensway up

Harris Queensway became a prominent firm feature in Stores, closing 12 higher at 26 1/2 following investment buying. Tins Products were similarly supported and finished 5 to the good at 58 1/2, while Leasford improved 7 1/2 in a thin market to 18 1/2. Still reflecting takeover hopes, Peters added 3 more to 7 1/2, but profit-taking after the recent, good rise left MTF Furniture down 6 at 16 1/2. Among the leaders, Gussies A reacted 6 to 41 1/2 after recent Press-inspired strength and Marks and Spencer softened a penny to 11 1/2. Renewed speculative interest, however, lifted Burton A to 25 1/2.

A buoyant market of late on asset value considerations and bid hopes. Style Shoes ran back 1 1/2 to 20 1/2. Profit-taking after the previous day's rise of 3 which followed the better-than-expected annual results. Electrical leaders drifted a few pence easier. Elsewhere, Sound Diffusion encountered profit-taking and shed 3 to 12 1/2, while Fresh occasional offerings left Ward and Ginstone 1/2 cheaper at 8 1/2. In contrast, United Colloid 2 further to 18 1/2. Brooks Group were supported at 9 1/2, up 6, along with Automated Security, 5 to the good at 17 1/2. Fresh interest was shown in Concord Robotics which improved 2 further to 4 1/2.

Leading Engineers turned easier, mainly on lack of fresh support. John Brown gave up 8 to 41 1/2 and Hawker 6 to 19 1/2, while Tubes eased 4 to 32 1/2. Elsewhere, Aversys reacted 7 to 24 1/2 following the previous day's burst of speculative activity, but Wellman Engineering ended 3 1/2 to the good at 6 1/2 after news of the increased offer worth 70p cash from Redman Electric Materials (Great Bridge) hardened a penny to 10 1/2 in response to the interim statement, and favourable Press mention left W. E. Norton 1/2 dearer at 26 1/2. Occasional support lifted Metaltrax 3 to 6 1/2 and Hartman a similar amount to 18 1/2, but W. E. Norton reacted 1/2 to 5 1/2 after the recent improvement on the annual results.

Unilever lower

Scattered selling and an absence of buying partially eroded recent gains in leading Foods where Tate and Lyle slipped 2 to 13 1/2, Cadbury Schweppes eased a penny to 5 1/2 and J. Sainsbury relinquished 5 to 32 1/2. Still unsettled by the company's proposed capital reduction, Barker and Dobson were subjected to another bout of selling and touched 17 1/2 before settling at 17 1/2, a penny

down on balance. On the other hand, further speculative support prompted gains of 4 and 5 respectively in Bernard Matthews, 27 1/2, and William Morrison, 17 1/2.

Profit-taking clipped 7 from Trusthouse Forte to 12 1/2 and left Grand Metropolitan 4 cheaper at 14 1/2. The withdrawal of recent investment support made for easier conditions in the Miscellaneous industrial leaders yesterday. Unilever led the retreat with a fall of 12 to 50 1/2, while Glaxo declined 5 to 43 1/2 and Turner and Newall dipped 3 to 12 1/2. Elsewhere, Carlton Industries were notable for a speculative rise of 10 to 26 1/2, while hiving in front of today's preliminary figures left Radiant Metal 4 dearer at 4 1/2. Ahead of Monday's annual results, AGE Research advanced 8 to 17 1/2 and Telson PWS improved 3 to 10 1/2 in response to the increase in interim earnings. A couple of pence easier in front of the announcement, Longton Transport picked up on the favourable results to close 2 better on balance at 8 1/2. Still drawing strength from recent Press comment, E. Fogarty added 9 more to 33 1/2, while Canhh put on 5 to 13 1/2 following the chairman's encouraging remarks at the annual meeting. Speculative support was again forthcoming for Avon Rubber which improved 4 to 14 1/2 and buyers lifted Diploma Investments 3 to 32 1/2. Profit-taking after the previous day's jump of 27 which reflected the doubled interim dividend, higher profits and proposed 50 per cent scrip issue, prompted a reaction of 10 to 44 1/2 in J. Bibby.

Motor sectors closed mixed. Automotive Products interim statement betwixt general expectations, although the share rose 1/2 to 8 1/2 despite some accompanying cautious remarks about profit margins. Flight Refuelling finished a similar amount better at 19 1/2 as speculative demand revived, but James Woodhead, 10 1/2, and Telford, 10 1/2, succumbed to profit-taking after recent firmness and eased 5 and 4 respectively. Support also fell away for Lex Service, 3 lower at 8 1/2.

Among quiet Paper/Printings, David S. Smith fell 3 to 7 1/2 following the reduced annual profits, while Buzell firmed that amount to 10 1/2, as did Jefferson Smurfit, 14 1/2.

Firm of late as cheaper money hopes, occasional profit-taking left Land Securities 4 down at 30 1/2. MEPC shed a penny to 15 1/2. Elsewhere in Properties, speculative counter Imry slipped 1 1/2 to 62 1/2, but late demand

lifted Hammerson "A" that much to 88 1/2.

Sellers eventually gained command in the Oil sector after a reasonable two-way trade. British Petroleum reacted 15 to 1,195 1/2 and Shell 3 to 35 1/2, while in secondary issues, Tricentrol, down 9 at 23 1/2, failed to benefit from the royalty deal with the Government. Oil Exploration fell 6 to 35 1/2 and Ultramar 1 to 30 1/2, while Shell 3 to 35 1/2, took a turn for the better after recent dullness and rallied 6 to 25 1/2.

Trusts trended firmer again, but York Green gave up 1 1/2 to 12 1/2 in Financials following the annual results and proposed one-for-one rights issue. David Dixon added 4 more to 17 1/2 on further consideration of Wednesday's excellent annual statement. The trend elsewhere in Textiles was easier, however, Courtaulds slipping a penny to 8 1/2 and Carpets International 2 to 5 1/2.

Dealings were resumed in Smeasee Hunter following Wednesday's 8 1/2 per share offer from Britannia Arrow, suspended some seven weeks ago at 7 1/2, the shares opened at 8 1/2 and drifted gently easier in a reasonable business to close at 8 1/2.

Further gains in Golds

It was another good day for the mining market, particularly for the South African Golds. The latter started a strong demand from both London and overseas following the further rise in the bullion price, which was finally another \$5 higher at \$298.375 an ounce. Prices ended the day a fraction below the best but gains were sufficient to lift the Gold Mines index 8 1/2 to 168 1/2 for a two-day improvement of 16 1/2 and the ex-premium index 6 1/2 to 151 1/2.

FINANCIAL TIMES STOCK INDICES. Table with columns for various indices (Government Secs, Fixed Interest, Industrial, Gold Mines, etc.) and their values for Aug 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.

HIGHS AND LOWS. Table with columns for High, Low, and S.E. ACTIVITY. Includes sub-tables for Govt. Secs, Fixed Int., Ind. Ord., Gold Mines, and Ex. Spm.

NEW HIGHS AND LOWS FOR 1979. Table with columns for New Highs and New Lows, listing various stocks and their prices.

OPTIONS. Table with columns for Deal, Declared, Settlement, and For. Includes sub-tables for RISES AND FALLS YESTERDAY and DEALING DATES.

LONDON TRADED OPTIONS. Table with columns for Option, Ex. Price, Closing Price, Vol., and Equity Close. Includes sub-tables for Oct, Jan, April, August, November, February.

ACTIVE STOCKS. Table with columns for Stock, Denomination, Closing Price, Change, 1979, and 1978.

RECENT ISSUES. Table with columns for Issue, Price, and Stock.

FIXED INTEREST STOCKS. Table with columns for Issue, Price, and Stock.

"RIGHTS" OFFERS. Table with columns for Issue, Price, and Stock.

FT-ACTUARIES SHARE INDICES. Table with columns for Equity Groups & Sub-sections, Thurs. Aug. 9, 1979, and other dates.

FIXED INTEREST PRICE INDICES. Table with columns for British Govt. A. Gross Red. and other indices.

FIXED INTEREST YIELDS. Table with columns for British Govt. A. Gross Red. and other yields.

Table with columns for various financial metrics and indices.

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Table of authorised unit trusts including names like 'Murray Johnson Unit Trust', 'National and Commercial', and 'Royal Trust Managers Ltd.' with columns for unit price and percentage change.

Table of insurance and property bonds including 'Abbeys Life Assurance Co. Ltd.', 'Crown Life Assurance Co. Ltd.', and 'The London & Manchester Ass. Co. Ltd.' with details on policies and rates.

Table of offshore and overseas funds including 'Alexander Fund', 'Keyser Ullmann Ltd.', and 'Bank of America International S.A.' with columns for fund name, unit price, and performance.

Table of offshore and overseas funds (continued) including 'Keyser Ullmann Ltd.', 'Bank of America International S.A.', and 'Keyser Ullmann Ltd.' with columns for fund name, unit price, and performance.

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CHEMICALS, PLASTICS—Cont.

Table with columns: 1979 High, 1979 Low, Stock, Price, % of 1978, Div. Yield, Bid, Offer. Includes entries like Dow Chemical, Eastman Kodak, DuPont.

ENGINEERING—Continued

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Table with columns: 1979 High, 1979 Low, Stock, Price, % of 1978, Div. Yield, Bid, Offer. Includes entries like Treasury 3% 1982, Treasury 5% 1984.

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BEERS, WINES AND SPIRITS

Table with columns: 1979 High, 1979 Low, Stock, Price, % of 1978, Div. Yield, Bid, Offer. Includes entries like Anheuser-Busch, Heineken, Carlsberg.

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Table with columns: 1979 High, 1979 Low, Stock, Price, % of 1978, Div. Yield, Bid, Offer. Includes entries like J.C. Penney, Sears & Roebuck.

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Table with columns: 1979 High, 1979 Low, Stock, Price, % of 1978, Div. Yield, Bid, Offer. Includes entries like Treasury 15% 1986, Treasury 18% 1988.

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Table with columns: 1979 High, 1979 Low, Stock, Price, % of 1978, Div. Yield, Bid, Offer. Includes entries like Amstar, Weyerhaeuser, Potlatch.

ELECTRICALS

Table with columns: 1979 High, 1979 Low, Stock, Price, % of 1978, Div. Yield, Bid, Offer. Includes entries like AEG, Siemens, Westinghouse.

INDUSTRIALS (Miscel.)

Table with columns: 1979 High, 1979 Low, Stock, Price, % of 1978, Div. Yield, Bid, Offer. Includes entries like Alcoa, Boeing, General Electric.

INTERNATIONAL BANK

Table with columns: 1979 High, 1979 Low, Stock, Price, % of 1978, Div. Yield, Bid, Offer. Includes entries like Citicorp, First Nat., Royal Bank.

CANADIANS

Table with columns: 1979 High, 1979 Low, Stock, Price, % of 1978, Div. Yield, Bid, Offer. Includes entries like Alcan, Bell Canada, Imperial Oil.

BANKS AND HIRE PURCHASE

Table with columns: 1979 High, 1979 Low, Stock, Price, % of 1978, Div. Yield, Bid, Offer. Includes entries like Bank of Montreal, CIBC.

COMMONWEALTH & AFRICAN LOANS

Table with columns: 1979 High, 1979 Low, Stock, Price, % of 1978, Div. Yield, Bid, Offer. Includes entries like Anglo-Siam, Anglo-South Africa.

LOANS

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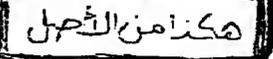
Large table of stock prices for various companies, including food and grocery items, hotels, and industrial firms.

INDUSTRIALS (Miscel.)

Table of stock prices for various industrial companies, including Alcoa, Boeing, and General Electric.

FOOD, GROCERIES, ETC.

Table of stock prices for various food and grocery companies, including Unilever, Nestle, and Borden.







Cabinet set to endorse Rhodesia proposals

BY PHILIP RAWSTORNE

THE CABINET is expected today to endorse detailed constitutional proposals for bringing Rhodesia to legal independence.

The Government's aim is to secure rapid progress towards a peaceful and internationally recognised settlement. So long as this is in prospect, Mrs. Thatcher should be able to contain the threat of rebellion among Tory Right-wingers in the Commons.

This weekend, Mr. Derek Day, the senior Foreign Office official who has been the Government's link man in Salisbury, will convey the Government's peace plan to Bishop Abel Muzorewa, the Zimbabwe Rhodesian Prime Minister.

The proposals will also be put to Mr. Joshua Nkomo and Mr. Robert Mugabe, the Patriotic Front leaders and to the heads of the African Front Line states.

Mrs. Thatcher and Lord Carrington, the Foreign Secretary, who returned from Lusaka

on Wednesday night, met at Downing Street yesterday to complete details of the plan which they will present to the Cabinet.

The Prime Minister, who also had talks yesterday with Mr. William Whitelaw, the Home Secretary, is anxious to maintain the momentum of the Government's initiative launched at the Commonwealth Conference.

She hopes to call an all-party conference in London early next month to discuss a draft independence constitution based on the Government's proposals. This would ensure genuine black majority rule in Rhodesia but give safeguards to the white minority similar to those included in the constitutions of other African States when they were granted independence.

The main changes that will be sought in the present "defective" constitution will be in the legislative blocking powers held by the white minority and the composition of the commis-

sions for the public services and security forces.

If the conference reaches agreement on the shape of the constitution—and on such other difficult questions as a ceasefire in the guerrilla war and interim control of the Rhodesian armed forces—the stage would be set for fresh elections, supervised by the British Government and with Commonwealth observers.

If the initiative fails, or even begins to falter, the Prime Minister will come under intense pressure at the party conference in October to defy international opinion and recognise the Muzorewa government and lift sanctions.

Many resolutions demanding such moves immediately have already been submitted for debate at the Blackpool conference.

Many Tory MPs have also said that they will oppose the renewal of the Rhodesian sanctions when it comes before the Commons in November.

ITV shutdown fears as ACAS peace talks fail

BY GARETH GRIFFITHS, LABOUR STAFF

THERE IS little hope of an early settlement of the Independent Television dispute. The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service said yesterday it saw no purpose in holding further talks with the two sides.

There were suggestions in the industry last night that the companies plan to close down the entire ITV network until the three-week-old dispute is settled.

Mr. Ron Carrington, labour relations adviser to the Independent Television Companies Association, said there was a great danger of the dispute spreading. Thames, Harlech and Ulster are off the air at present.

Technicians Television executives said they were afraid the absence of a proper national news service meant companies were contravening the Television Act laws governing ITV.

Independent Television News has not been broadcast since Wednesday because of strike action by technicians. The ACAS decision to call off further talks follows the companies' decision not to move from their present 15 per cent offer. ACAS officials however plan to keep in close touch with events.

The union side indicated willingness at its earlier meeting with ACAS for further discussions and a joint meeting with the association. Mr. Carrington said there was a limit to which employers were prepared to go. The association estimates that with fringe benefits, the offer is worth up to 23 per

cent. Managing directors from the 15 companies met yesterday after the talks at ACAS. In a statement issued last night they said ITV faced its most serious threat for many years.

Unofficial action by the unions has affected the ITV programme schedules to such an extent the network service is in danger of becoming inadequate.

The absence of ITN bulletins and programmes from Thames, Harlech and Ulster is causing major gaps in programme output, the statement said.

In the union side at the ACAS meeting were: Mr. Jack O'Connor, national ITV officer for the Association of Cinematograph Technicians; Mr. Jack Wilson, general secretary of the National Association of Theatrical Television and

Kine Employees; and Mr. A.H. McBrown, national officer for the Electrical and Plumbing Trades Union.

Mr. O'Connor said yesterday the moves to step up the dispute were coming from the Independent Television Companies Association. The ACTT had decided not to spread industrial action unless more of its members were suspended.

The union side expressed concern last night that the dispute could be longer than at first thought.

Mr. Wilson said before the start of the ACAS talks that a settlement could be a long slow process.

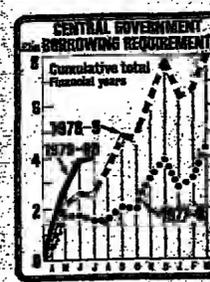
Mr. McBrown said the technicians were exercising considerable restraint in not taking industrial action.

THE LEX COLUMN

Cost of a North Sea guarantee

The onerous special royalty due to the Government on Tricentrol's share of Thistle field production has for too long cast a shadow over the company's prospects. It was the only company which had to turn to the Government for a loan guarantee. The one-for-four rights issue in April, raising £17.8m, was a measure of how expensive the financing deal had become—the purpose of the issue was said to be to give Tricentrol the flexibility to choose exactly when to pay off the Government guaranteed debt. Yesterday shareholders learned they would be suffering still more dilution through the placing of 4.1m more shares (just over 8 per cent of the equity) at 210p. Yet it looks to be well worthwhile since this £8.6m issue forms part of an agreement to pay off the special royalty once and for all in cash, a total of around £20m in all.

Index fell 6.3 to 467.4



Both figures look for a second half slowdown. Yesterday's figures for central government borrowing in July still leave the cumulative CGBR since April running distinctly on the high side, but the effects of the Budget are still to show through. The July income tax rebates will increase the August CGBR and it will not be until the third quarter that higher VAT and spending cuts start to show through.

Automotive Products

Automotive Products has managed to catch up after ailing its operations badly disrupted in the first two months of the year, and interim pre-tax profits show a small rise of £7.9m from £7.9m. The Republic of Ireland market has picked up after a sluggish period and car manufacturing has been smooth run, which has enabled AP to recover from the effects of the Ford strike. Now it is looking to recapture sales in Iran.

The company raised prices by an average 9 per cent early this year, but is unlikely to move them again before the autumn, although costs are increasing and strong sterling is putting its Continental European sales under pressure. Despite a sluggish market, margins would be surprising if AP did not make a good £10m in the year as a whole (against £15.1m), which puts the share up 44p yesterday at 384p, 10p/e of under 61 fully paid. This does not look expensive especially as the interim dividend has been doubled and the final will probably be double too, raising the once miserable yield to a respectable 5 per cent.

GEC

Unlike last year there is no cosy two-page game of analysis and leaders for shareholders and workers to play in the employee report sent out with GEC's traditionally spartan statutory annual report and accounts. Instead employees are treated to a rather fulsome document that emphasises something called "wealth created" which seems to be the same as added value.

Profits are mentioned in the divisional breakdown but this seems rather inconsistent and one wonders why GEC did not try to estimate the wealth created by each of its main businesses instead. As to the future, GEC says remarkably little save that its achievement will be "no less impressive than those of the past decade. That is quite a boast.

French in bid to reduce effect of oil imports bill

BY ROBERT MAUTHNER IN PARIS

THE FRENCH Government is preparing a series of measures aimed at offsetting the adverse effects the rise in imported oil prices is having on the country's economy.

Recent price rises will increase France's oil bill by an estimated Ffr 18bn (nearly £2bn) this year and by as much as Ffr 30bn in 1980.

M. Raymond Barre, the Prime Minister, adamantly refuses to adopt a full-scale deflationary package because of the boost this would give to inflation and because of the fragility of France's trade balance. But he made clear yesterday that a stimulus would be given to the housing and public works sector in the early autumn.

Compensation for rising living costs would also be given to the "least favoured" section of the population in the form of increased allowances to low-income families with at least one child.

The special social security payment made at the beginning of every school year to families

with an annual income of less than Ffr 20,000 (about £3,000) and at least one child between the age of six and 16, will be raised substantially. The precise increase has not yet been announced.

The Government's attempt to take the sting out of the latest series of price rises for petrol, public transport, electricity, telephone calls, and rents—announced, as is the tradition in France, during the August holiday period—is unlikely to placate the unions and Left-wing opposition parties.

M. Barre has been beating the oil drum for all he is worth in his public explanations of mounting inflation, which is running at an annual rate of 11-12 per cent. Yet the unions and some economic commentators have stressed that higher oil prices cannot be held entirely responsible for the sharp increase in the cost of living.

Basing themselves on official statistics, the Prime Minister's

critics have pointed out that only 0.9 per cent of the cumulative price rise of 5.3 per cent during the first half of this year could be attributed to the increase in oil prices.

If there had been no rise in oil prices at all, this year, the rate of inflation would still be running at 9.4 per cent, an indication that M. Barre's medicine has failed to work.

M. Georges Marchais, the French Communist leader, who said yesterday that he was prepared "to ally himself with the devil" to fight M. Giscard d'Estaing's and M. Barre's economic policy, has accused the Government of using the rises in oil prices as a pretext. M. Marchais said that the oil companies, which had made record profits last year, should be forced to bear more of the burden of higher crude oil costs, and that the State should cease to pocket two-thirds of the price of petrol paid by the consumer.

Editorial Comment, Page 13

Steel corporation intends to continue coke imports

BY JOHN LLOYD

THE British Steel Corporation is likely to continue to import high quality coking coal for its new Redcar works on Teesside, for at least two years.

The National Coal Board has made strenuous efforts over the past three months to produce a suitable substitute for the imports, but it appears that British Steel is not convinced that it would be of sufficiently high quality.

In March, British Steel signed a £14m contract for over 500,000 tonnes of medium volatile coking coal from Australia. Shortly before the election in May, the Labour Government introduced a system of licences to control coking coal imports, but the contract was not cancelled.

At the same time, the board began tests at its Lambton coke ovens in Co. Durham, aimed at producing a high quality coke suitable for Redcar. Although these tests are continuing, British Steel intends to continue its imports.

Last year, the corporation imported about 1.7m tonnes of coking coal from Australia, Poland and the U.S. The extra contracts would bring its annual level to well over 2m tonnes.

The corporation has contended that imported coke is needed because the Coal Board cannot supply sufficient amounts of the high quality 301 coking coal grade. While the Australian coal is about £10 a tonne cheaper, British Steel says the price difference is not a major factor.

Japanese experts advising British Steel are believed to have said that only the im-

ported coke would produce steel of sufficiently high quality.

The Redcar ironmaking development, which represents a £400m investment by British Steel, is now close to commissioning. Two batteries of coke ovens, the second of which was commissioned yesterday, will feed the 10,000-tonne-a-day blastfurnace with more than 25,000 tonnes of coke a week.

Initial outputs from the coke ovens will be stockpiled in readiness for the opening of the blastfurnace.

The new coke oven battery has 66 ovens, and is identical with the No. 1 battery commissioned last May. The No. 2 battery, which will provide 85 jobs, has cost £35.7m.

Associated with the coke ovens is a by-products plant to produce tar, benzole and sulphur. The plant incorporates a waste gas cleaning system and a chemical treatment unit for liquid effluents.

London, Eastern and Cent. N. Foggy, with rain in places. Max. 19C (66F). Rest of England and Scotland, Wales, Channel Is, Ulster Cloudy, rain at times. Max. 19C (66F).

Outlook: Mostly cloudy with rain in places. Some bright intervals.

Weather

UK TODAY

GENERALLY cloudy with rain at times.

Worldwide weather forecast table with columns for location, temperature, and weather conditions.

Chemicals industry downturn likely, association says

BY ELAINE WILLIAMS

BRITAIN'S chemicals industry faces poor prospects in the coming year, according to the Chemical Industries Association.

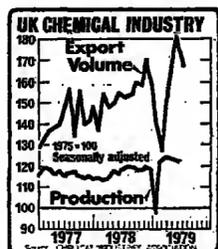
The association's latest economic bulletin says: Output this year will be, at best, 1 per cent up on 1978; falling demand next year will make price rises difficult to introduce.

Fuel shortages will hit output further; U.S. competition in Europe will intensify.

Ironically, the pessimistic forecasts come at a time of particularly buoyant sales by the major UK chemical companies. Business lost earlier this year through the road haulage strike and bad weather has been more than recovered.

But the high level of demand can be at least partly accounted for by companies flexing up in anticipation of price rises, the association says.

There are already signs of production tailing off, reflecting



despite a 10 to 15 per cent shortfall in deliveries by the main suppliers, have been avoided by running down stocks and buying at high prices on the European spot market.

But the association says that if the shortages continue, and British Gas is unable to supply sufficient gas to the industry as an alternative source of fuel, there will be a reduction in output.

Another problem is rapidly increasing feedstock costs, although these have been alleviated in the UK by the strength of the pound. Companies in the dyestuffs and pigments sectors in particular have suffered.

The association believes that increased competition from the U.S. is a threat in European markets. Demand in the U.S. has been weakening, and manufacturers there have lower feedstock costs and a greater price competitiveness as a result of the fall in the value of the dollar.

the slowdown in the economies of the developed nations.

Some manufacturers, anticipating a slump, have left plant idle rather than start it up for only a few months.

Next year, if demand falls, it will be difficult to sustain and increase product prices despite the continuance of high rates of inflation, the association says.

Serious shortages of fuel oil,

Continued from Page 1

Germany

the Government's view that a cut in state indebtedness must take precedence over tax benefits.

In an interview, Dr. Emminger said that additional Government revenue created through the current economic upswing should be used to reduce public sector borrowing. This in itself would help sustain the upswing by reducing the threat of a collision between the public and private sectors needs on the capital market.

This danger is revealed in the Bundesbank report for August published today. It shows that in the first seven months of this year the cash deficit of the Federal Government totalled some DM17bn (£4.2bn)—DM4bn higher than the sum for the same period of 1978 and roughly equal to the deficit so far expected for the year as a whole.

Continued from Page 1

Tricentrol buys out deal

value of the special royalty to which the Government is entitled. At the end of July the Government had earned the right to some £17.5m in royalties.

It was also pointed out in Whitehall that the Government had the benefit of taking the cash at today's money values. The risk element had also been removed, for the Government could have received much less than £20m if production from Thistle turned sour or if areas one and six were not developed.

Tricentrol believes it will benefit in the long run. It reckons it could have paid at least £30m and probably much more. The company said it had effectively acquired additional reserves of oil amounting to 2m to 3m barrels over the life of the field.

On this basis the company has

paid between £5.60 to £10 per barrel for the oil which is now valued at between £10 and £11 per barrel. It is almost certain, in the light of OPEC aspirations, that the price of oil will continue to increase in real terms.

Drilling

For Tricentrol much will depend on whether or not areas one and six are developed. Drilling has already begun on area one and it is possible that a well and a planned second well, will be used to exploit the reservoir.

If the operation is successful, oil from area one will be fed via sub-sea production systems to the main production platforms on the Thistle Field. Tricentrol has a 9.85 per cent stake in Thistle, which has some

500m barrels of recoverable reserves, and a 10 per cent interest in areas one and six which could have a further 100m barrels of recoverable oil.

The company will not be paying the Government in one lump sum. Instead it will make a first payment of £3.5m on Monday through the issue of 4,126,214 ordinary shares to the Government. These shares are being placed in the market by Morgan Grenfell and de Zoete & Bevan.

The second instalment of £9m will be paid in cash on August 31. A third instalment of £1m or less will be paid on September 1, 1980 while the final payment, calculated when the guarantee is discharged, will be made probably at the end of 1980. This last payment is not expected to amount to more than about £1.5m.

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